xxxHOLiC

OMNIBUS 1

CLAMP

xxxHOLiC

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TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
William Flanagan

LETTERED BY
Dana Hayward

KC
KODANSHA
COMICS

xxxHOLiC crosses over with *Tsubasa*. Although it isn't necessary to read *Tsubasa* to understand the events in *xxxHOLiC,* you'll get to see the same events from different perspectives if you read both!

xxxHOLiC Omnibus volume 1 is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

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Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Kodansha Comics books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Kodansha Comics not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Kodansha Comics books.

-san:	This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.
-sama:	This is one level higher than "-san" and is used to confer great respect.
-dono:	This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.
-kun:	This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

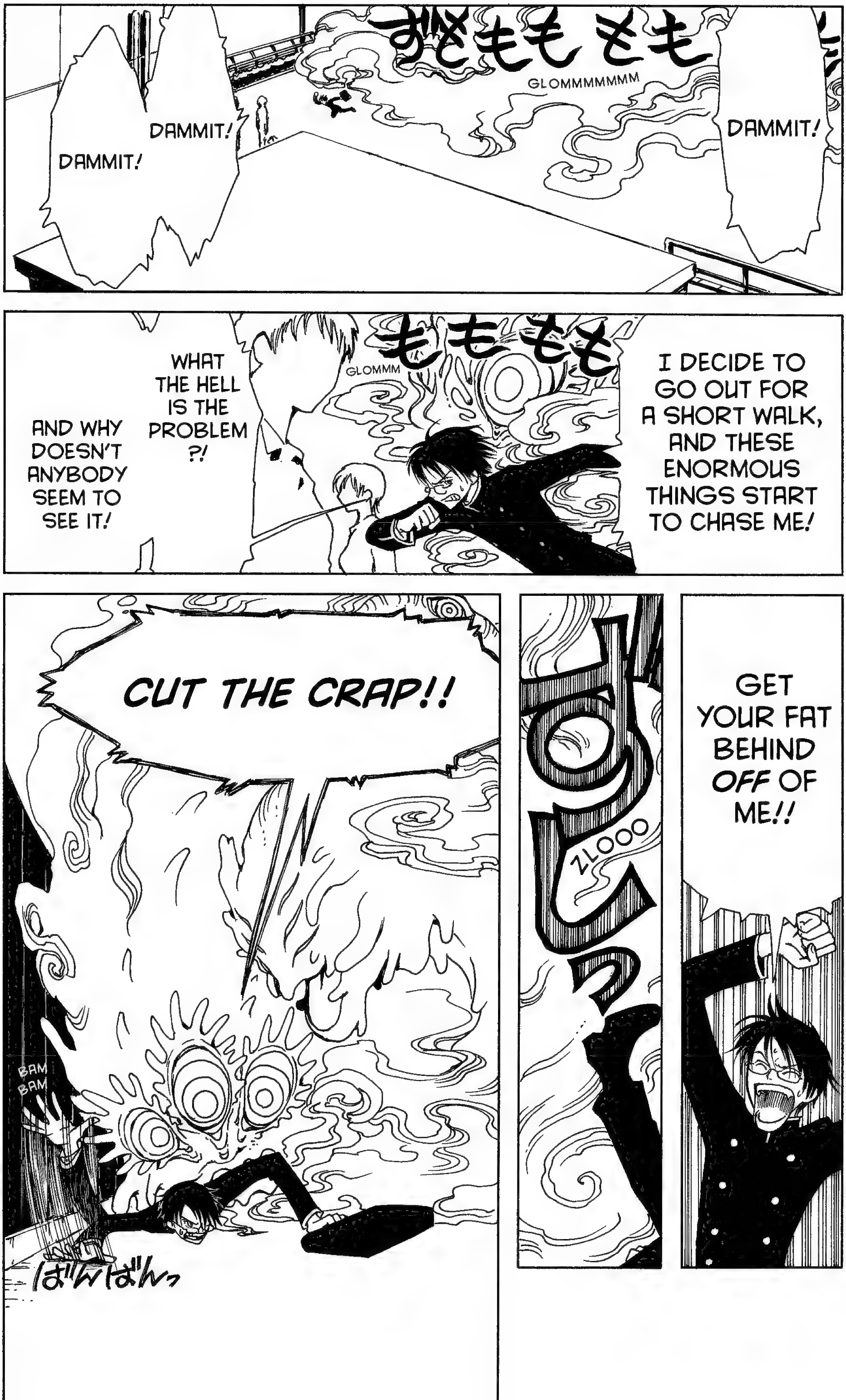
Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

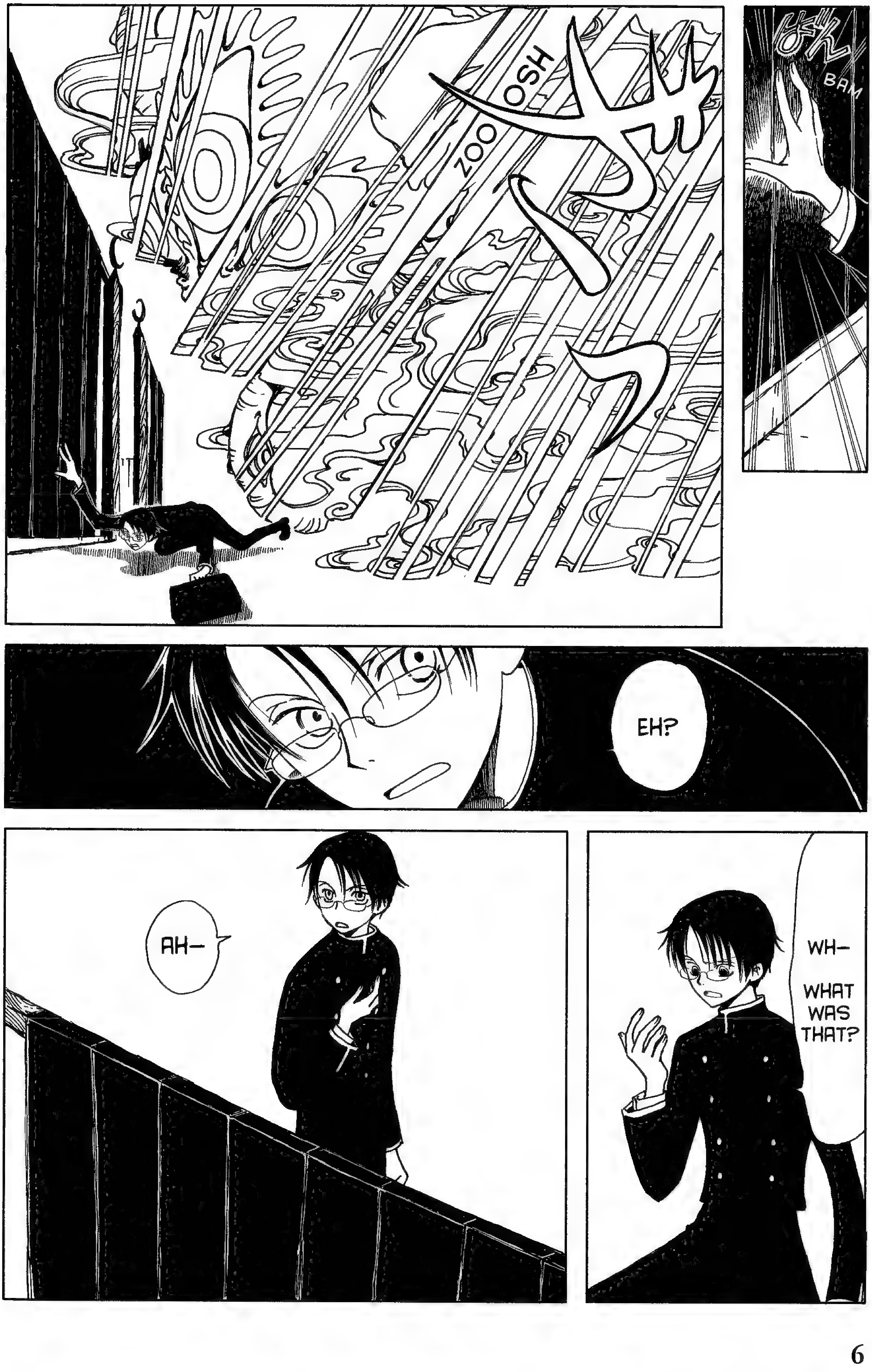
-[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as yobisute, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

THERE ARE A GREAT MANY STRANGE THINGS IN THE WORLD...
...BUT NO MATTER HOW ODD...
...HOW INCREDIBLE SOMETHING MAY BE...
IF A HUMAN DOES NOT TOUCH IT...
IF A HUMAN DOES NOT SEE IT...
IF A HUMAN IS NOT INVOLVED WITH IT...
...IT IS SIMPLY SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED.
SIMPLY A MATTER THAT WILL FADE WITH TIME.
HUMANS. MANKIND. HOMO SAPIENS.
HUMANS ARE THE MOST PROFOUNDLY MYSTERIOUS LIVING THINGS IN THE WORLD!

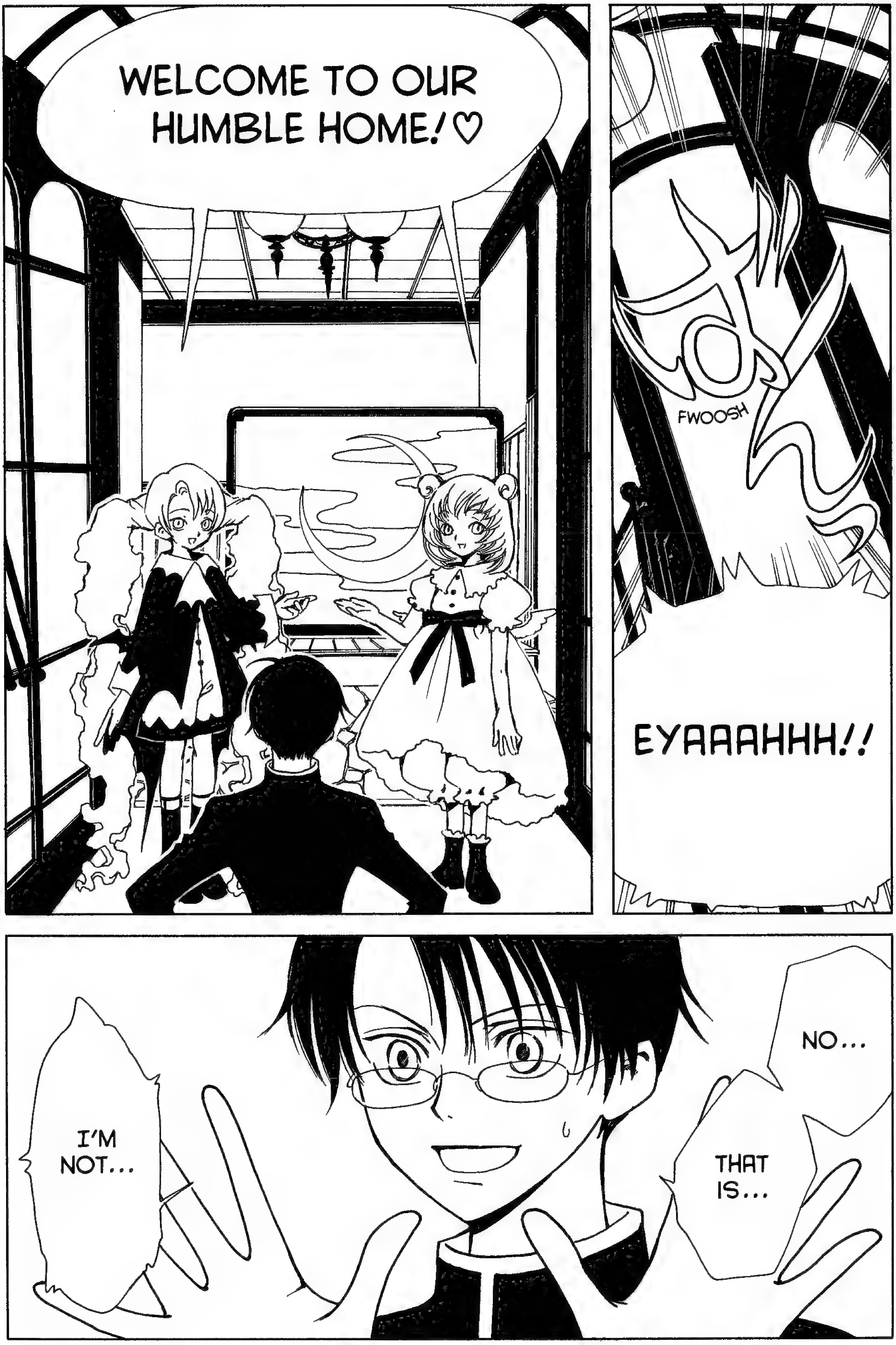
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

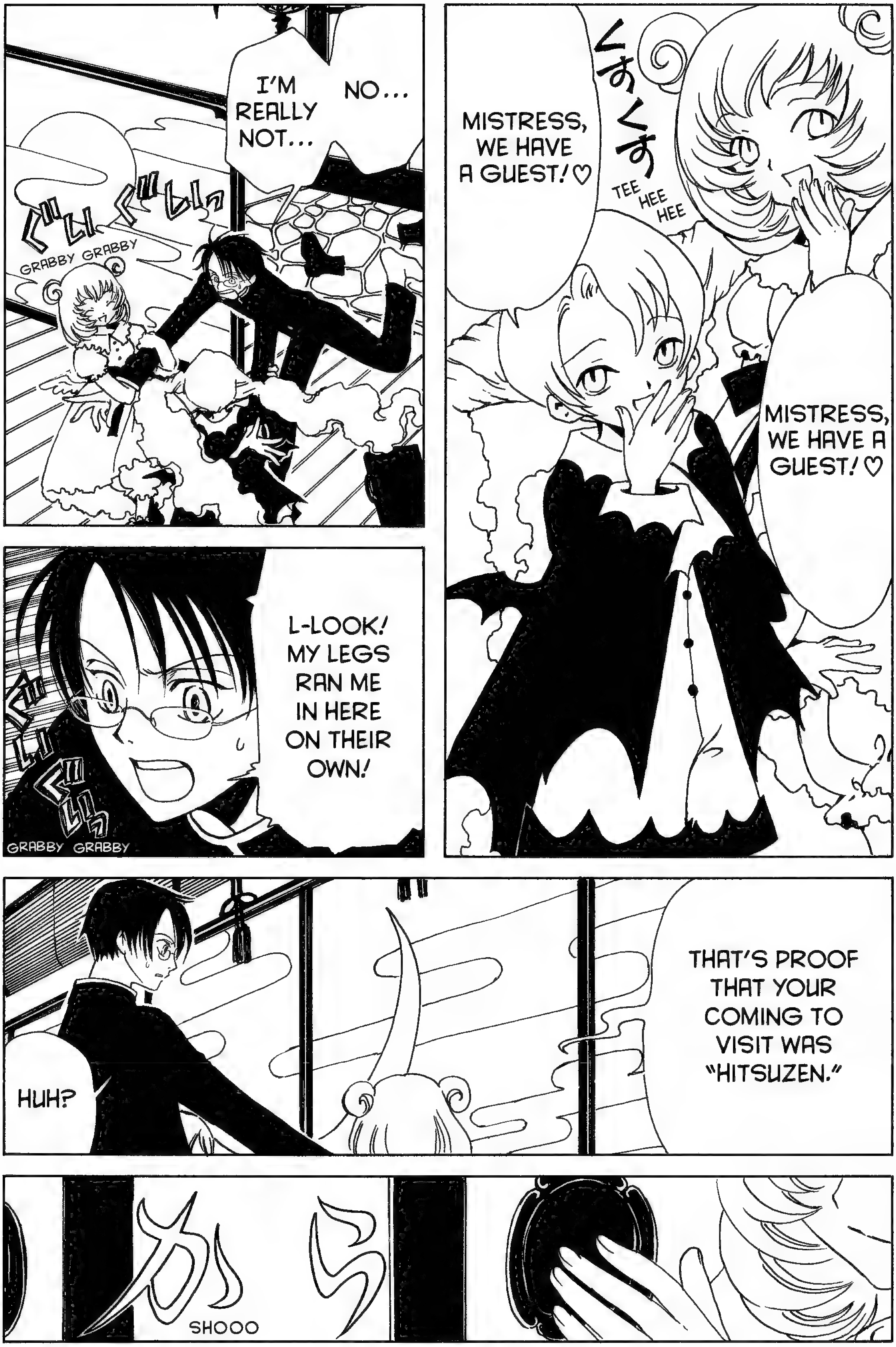
I...
...TOLD...
...YOU...
GET THE HELL AWAY FROM ME!!

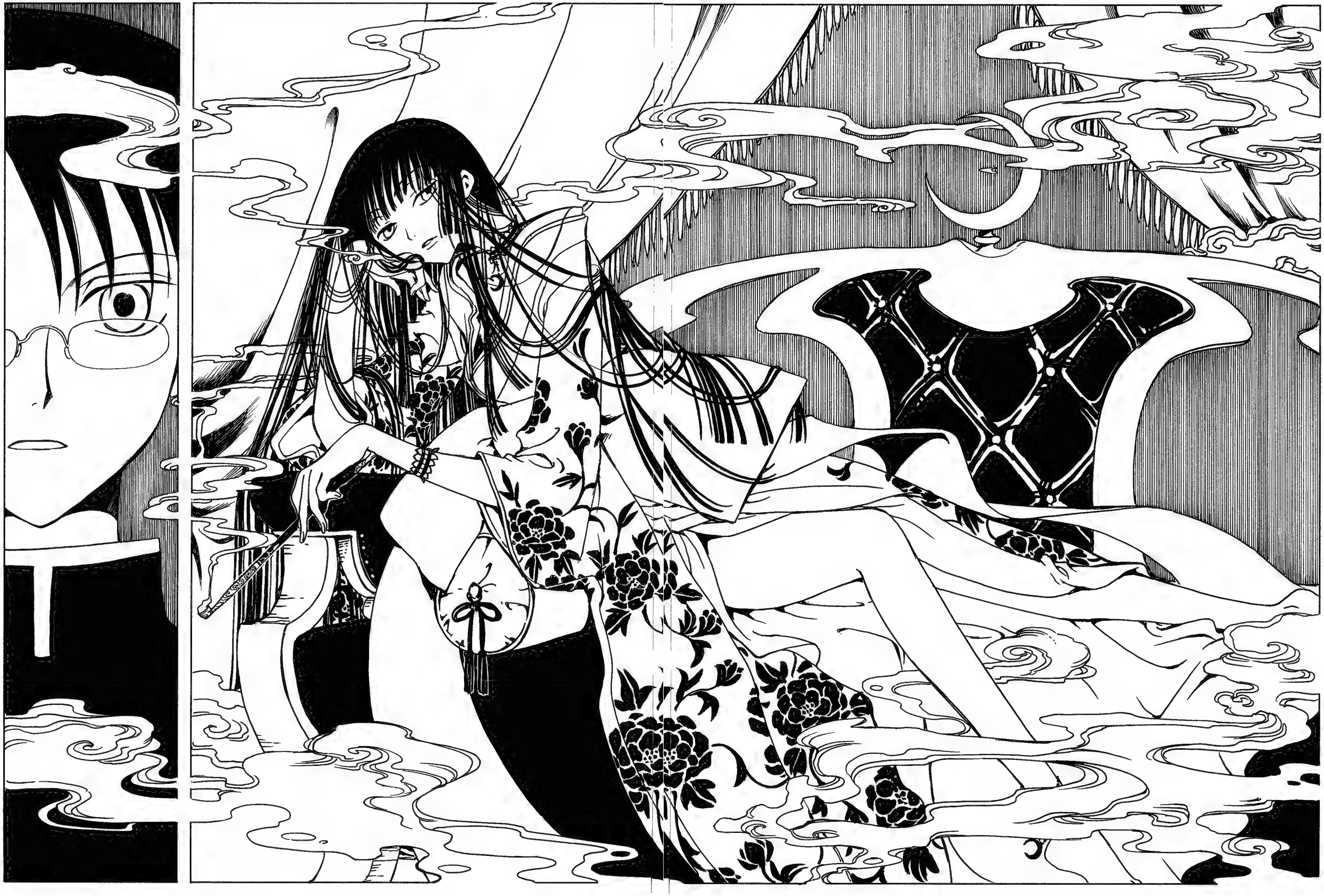

ずももも もも
GLOMMMMMMM
DAMMIT!
DAMMIT!
DAMMIT!
I DECIDE TO GO OUT FOR A SHORT WALK, AND THESE ENORMOUS THINGS START TO CHASE ME!
もももも
GLOMMM
WHAT THE HELL IS THE PROBLEM?!
AND WHY DOESN'T ANYBODY SEEM TO SEE IT!
GET YOUR FAT BEHIND *OFF* OF ME!!
ずしっ
ZLOOO
CUT THE CRAP!!
BAM BAM
ばんばんっ

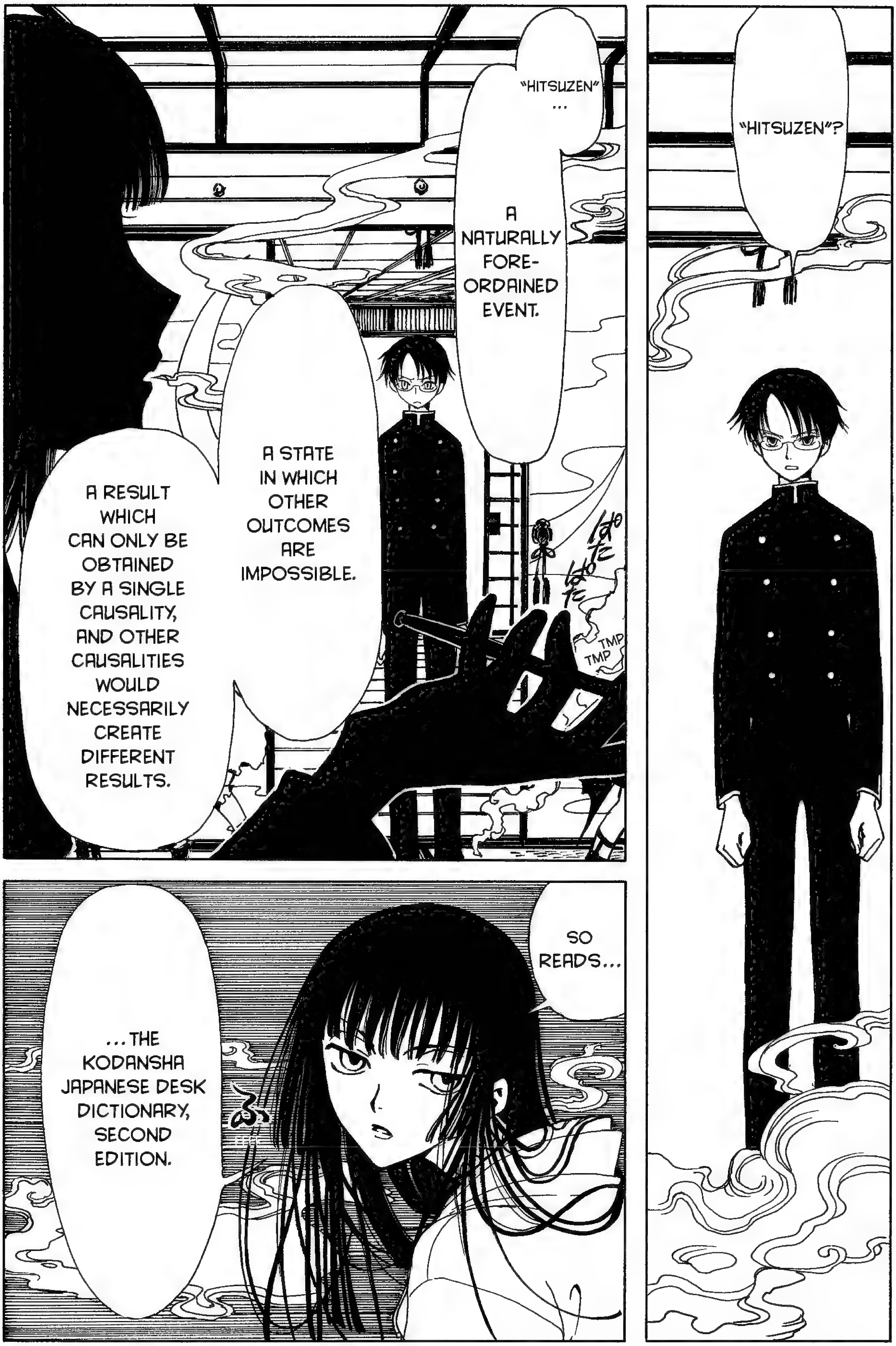

ばん
BAM
ZOOOSH
EH?
WH-
WHAT WAS THAT?
AH-

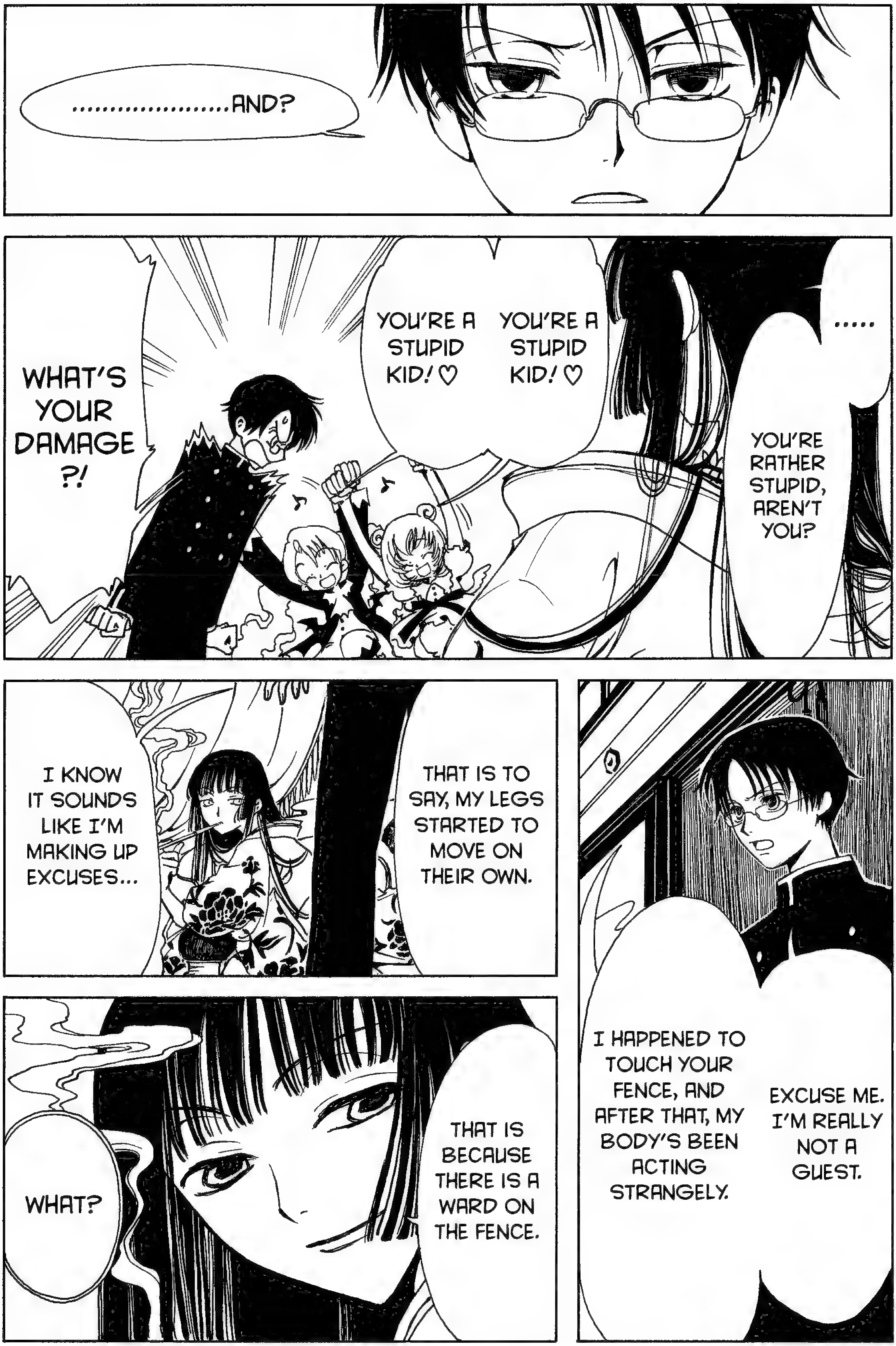
THIS HOUSE SURE IS *WEIRD*!!
HYUU
ひょ〜
WHA–?
ぐいんっ
BYOOO
H-HEY!! HOLD ON A SECOND!
とととと っ
WHOAH! WHOAH! WHOAH! WHOAH!
I SAID *WAIT!!*
IT'S NOT RIGHT TO WALK INTO SOMEBODY'S HOUSE WITHOUT ASKING!
BWOOO

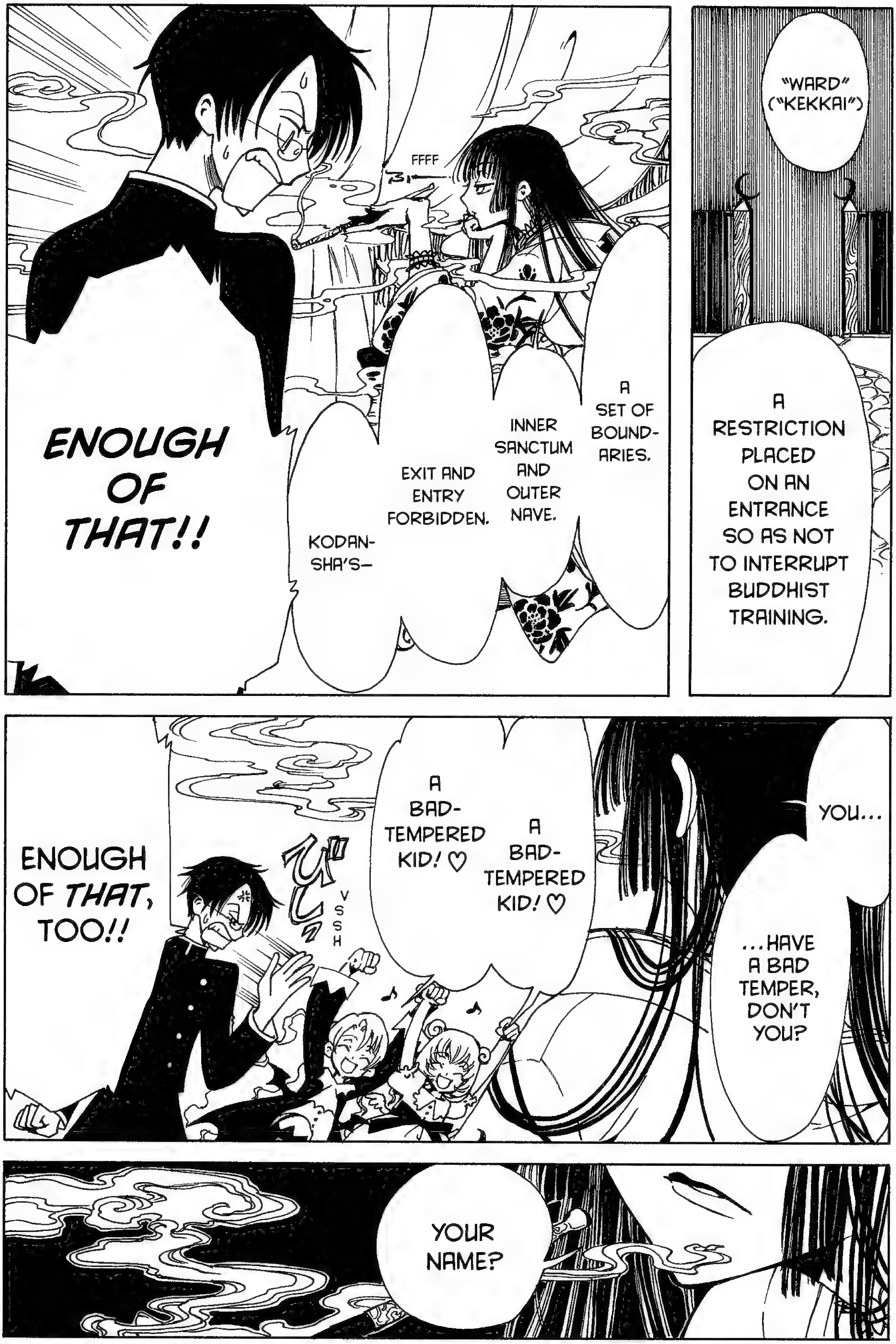

FWOOSH
EYAAAHHH!!
WELCOME TO OUR HUMBLE HOME!♡
NO...
THAT IS...
I'M NOT...


MISTRESS, WE HAVE A GUEST! ♡
くすくす
TEE HEE HEE
MISTRESS, WE HAVE A GUEST! ♡
NO...
I'M REALLY NOT...
ぐいぐいっ
GRABBY GRABBY
L-LOOK! MY LEGS RAN ME IN HERE ON THEIR OWN!
ぐいぐいっ
GRABBY GRABBY
THAT'S PROOF THAT YOUR COMING TO VISIT WAS "HITSUZEN."
HUH?
から
SHOOO

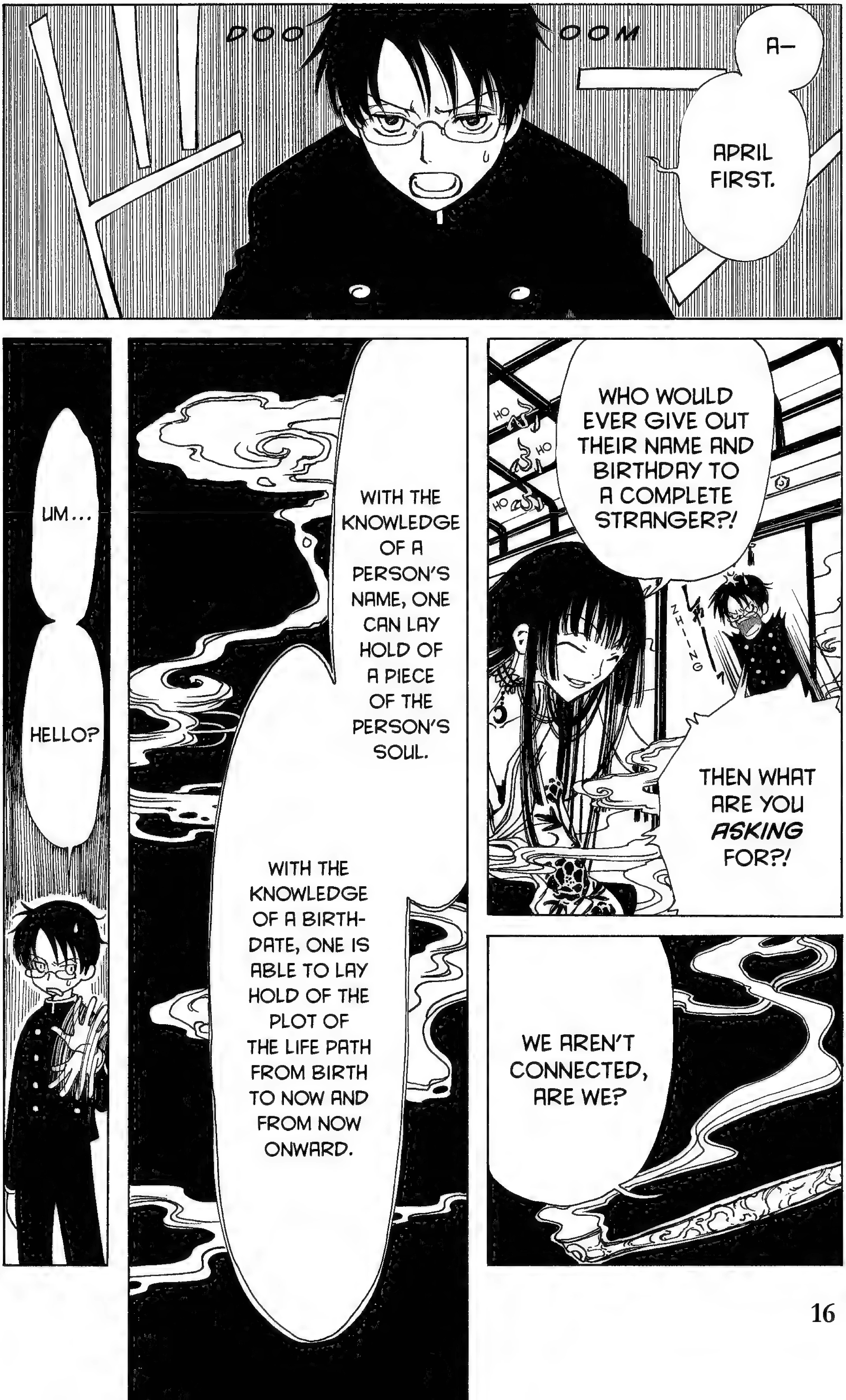


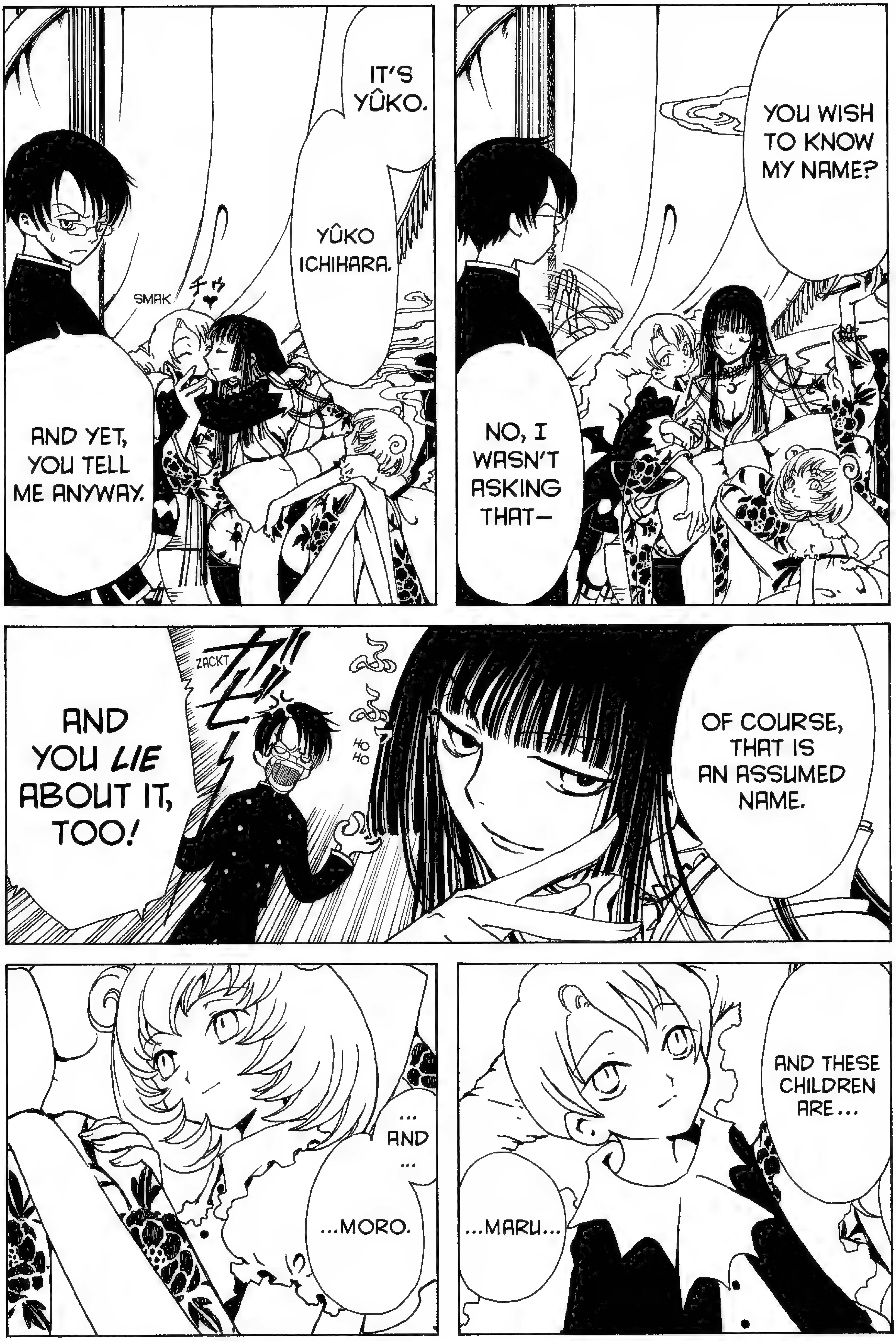

"HITSUZEN"?
"HITSUZEN"…
A NATURALLY FORE-ORDAINED EVENT.
A STATE IN WHICH OTHER OUTCOMES ARE IMPOSSIBLE.
A RESULT WHICH CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED BY A SINGLE CAUSALITY, AND OTHER CAUSALITIES WOULD NECESSARILY CREATE DIFFERENT RESULTS.
ぱた ぱた
TMP TMP
SO READS…
…THE KODANSHA JAPANESE DESK DICTIONARY, SECOND EDITION.
ふ

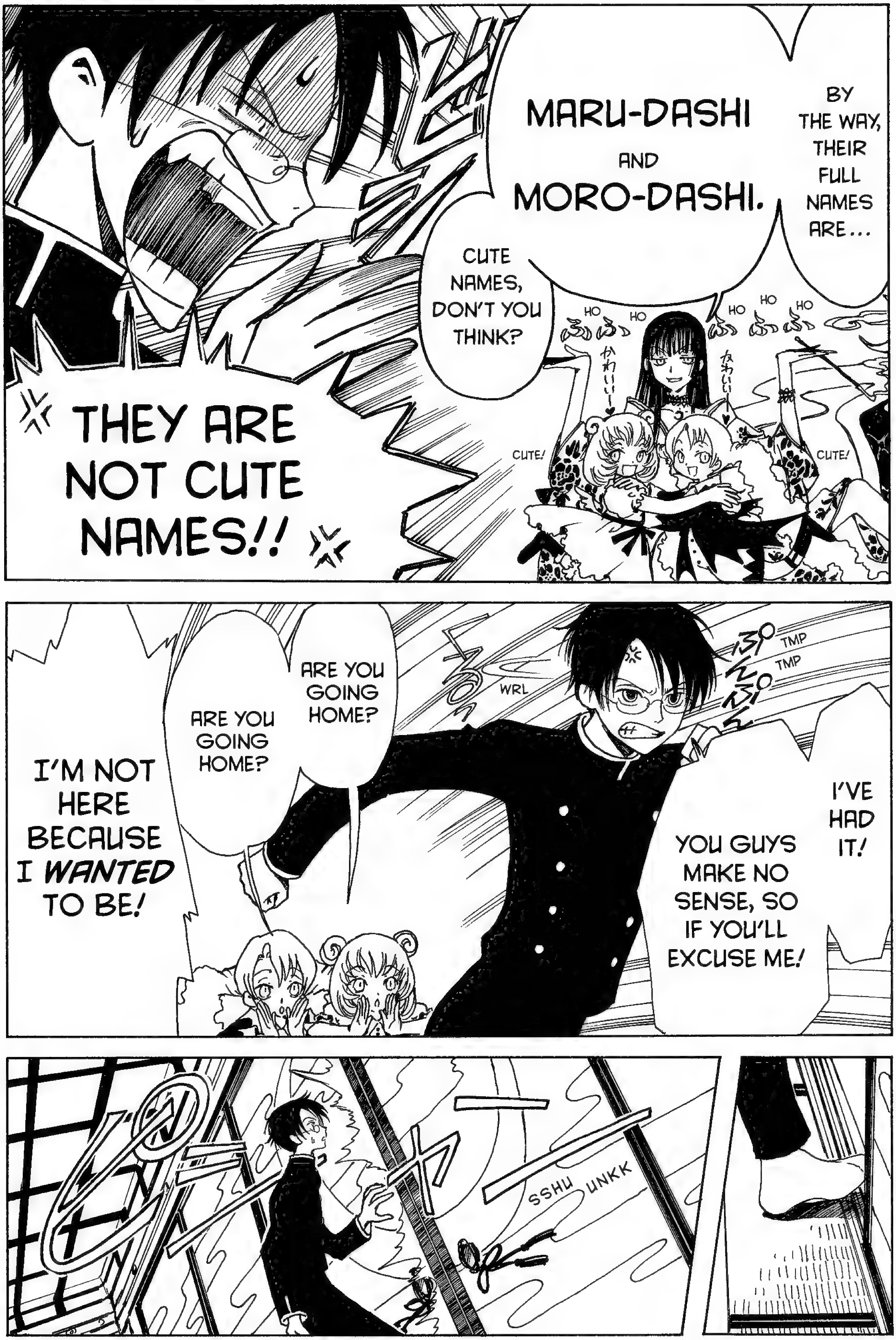

......................AND?
.....
YOU'RE RATHER STUPID, AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE A STUPID KID! ♡
YOU'RE A STUPID KID! ♡
WHAT'S YOUR DAMAGE?!
EXCUSE ME. I'M REALLY NOT A GUEST.
I HAPPENED TO TOUCH YOUR FENCE, AND AFTER THAT, MY BODY'S BEEN ACTING STRANGELY.
THAT IS TO SAY, MY LEGS STARTED TO MOVE ON THEIR OWN.
I KNOW IT SOUNDS LIKE I'M MAKING UP EXCUSES...
THAT IS BECAUSE THERE IS A WARD ON THE FENCE.
WHAT?

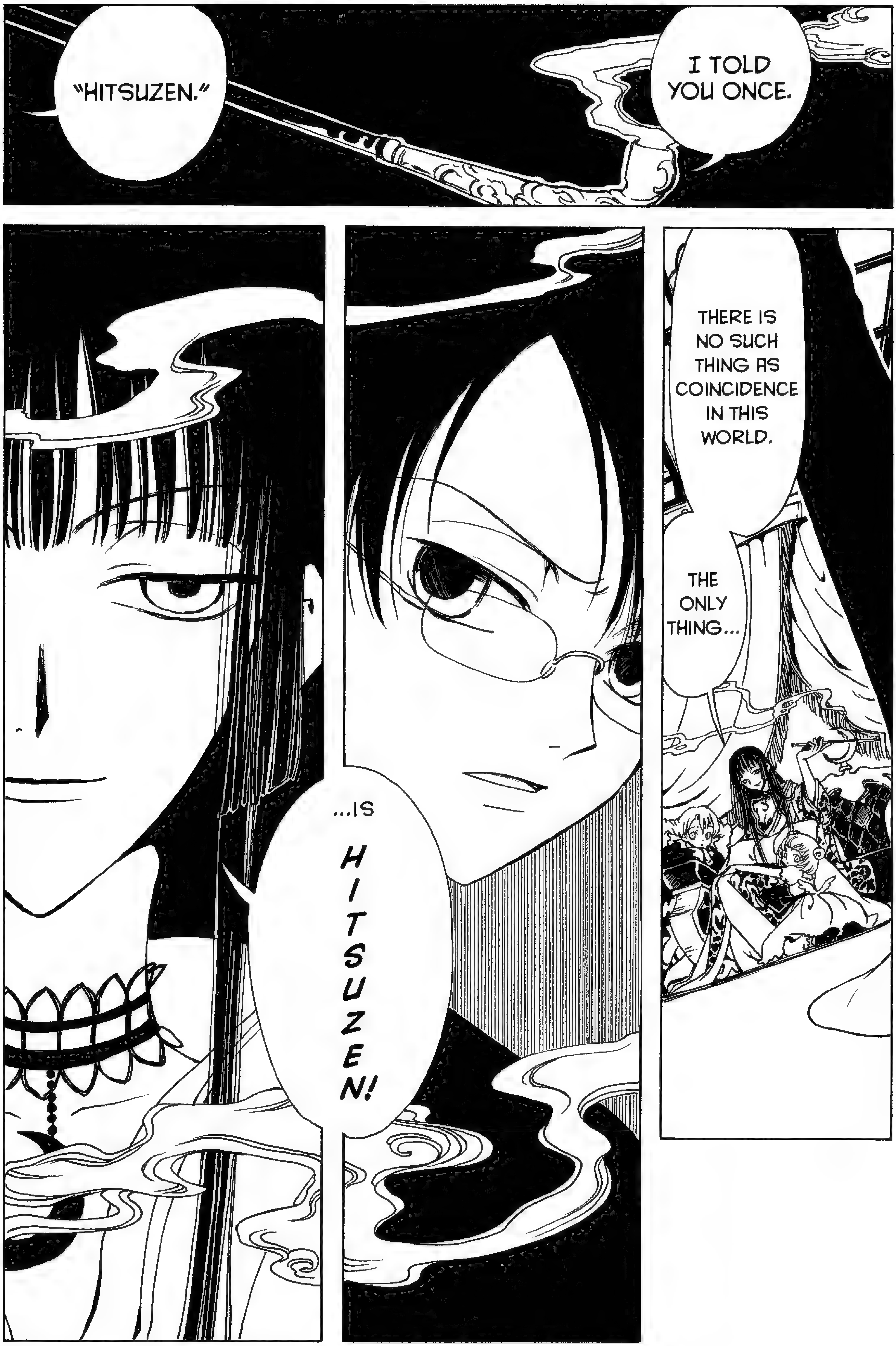

"WARD" ("KEKKAI")
A RESTRICTION PLACED ON AN ENTRANCE SO AS NOT TO INTERRUPT BUDDHIST TRAINING.
A SET OF BOUNDARIES.
INNER SANCTUM AND OUTER NAVE.
EXIT AND ENTRY FORBIDDEN.
KODANSHA'S—
FFFF
ENOUGH OF THAT!!
YOU...
...HAVE A BAD TEMPER, DON'T YOU?
A BAD-TEMPERED KID! ♡
A BAD-TEMPERED KID! ♡
VSSH
ENOUGH OF THAT, TOO!!
YOUR NAME?

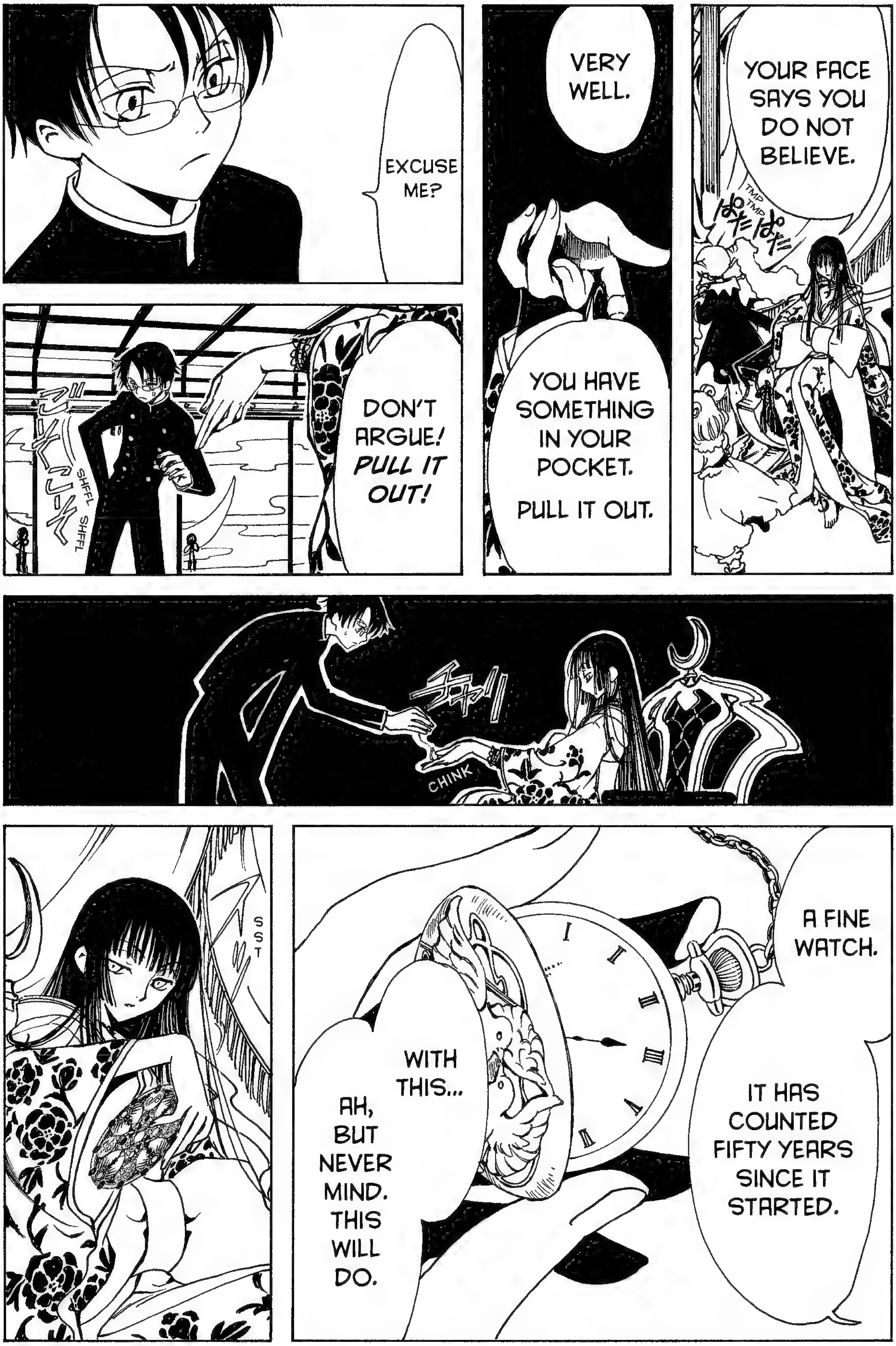
WHAT?
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
KIMIHIRO WATANUKI.
THAT'S SPELLED WITH THE CHARACTERS FOR APRIL FIRST...
..."THE "WATANUKI" PART.
EH?!
HOW DID...
I NEVER SAID HOW IT WAS SPELLED!
YOUR BIRTHDAY?

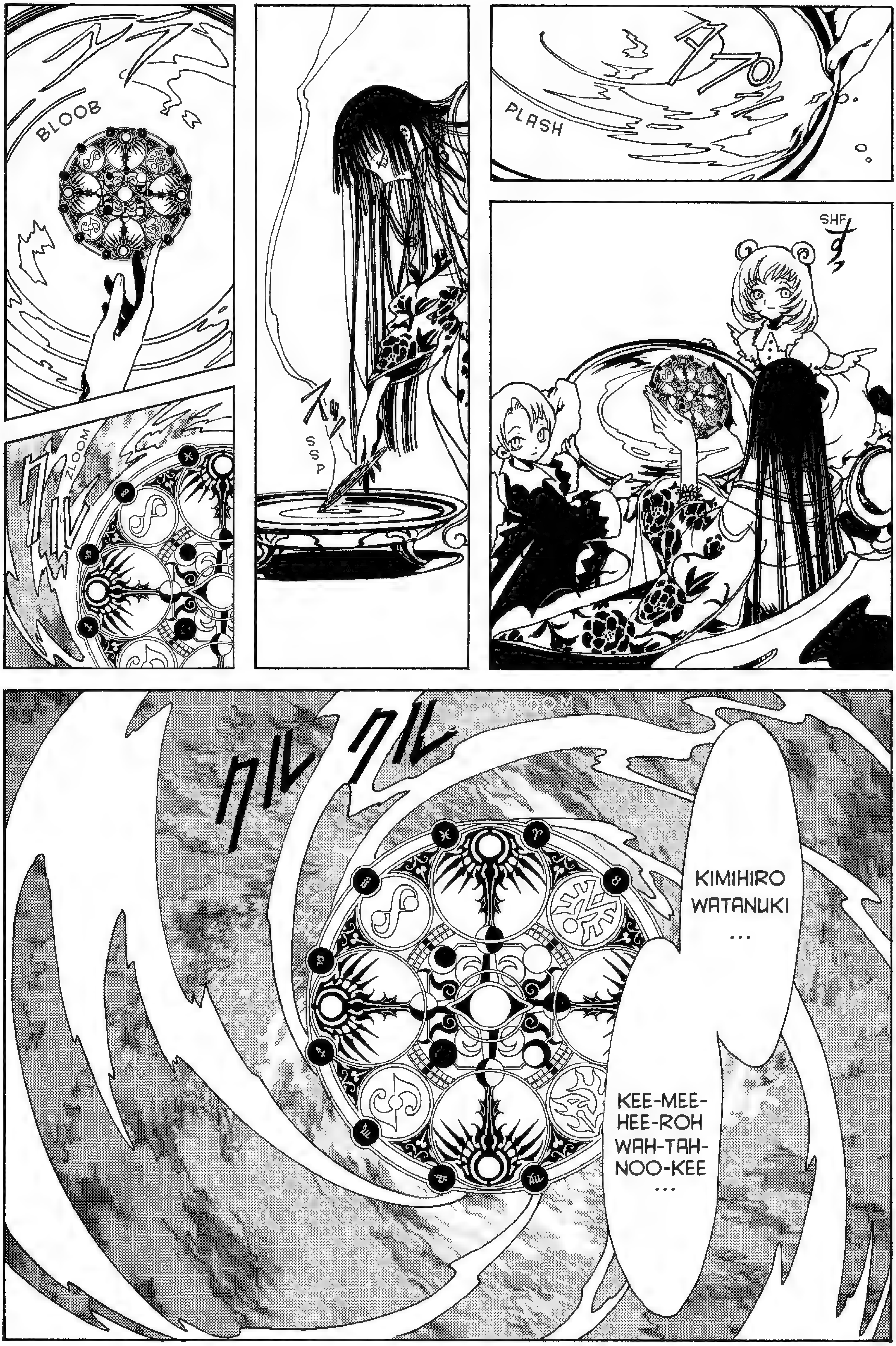

DOOOOM
A—
APRIL FIRST.
WHO WOULD EVER GIVE OUT THEIR NAME AND BIRTHDAY TO A COMPLETE STRANGER?!
HO HO HO
ZHING
THEN WHAT ARE YOU *ASKING* FOR?!
WE AREN'T CONNECTED, ARE WE?
WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF A PERSON'S NAME, ONE CAN LAY HOLD OF A PIECE OF THE PERSON'S SOUL.
WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF A BIRTHDATE, ONE IS ABLE TO LAY HOLD OF THE PLOT OF THE LIFE PATH FROM BIRTH TO NOW AND FROM NOW ONWARD.
UM...
HELLO?

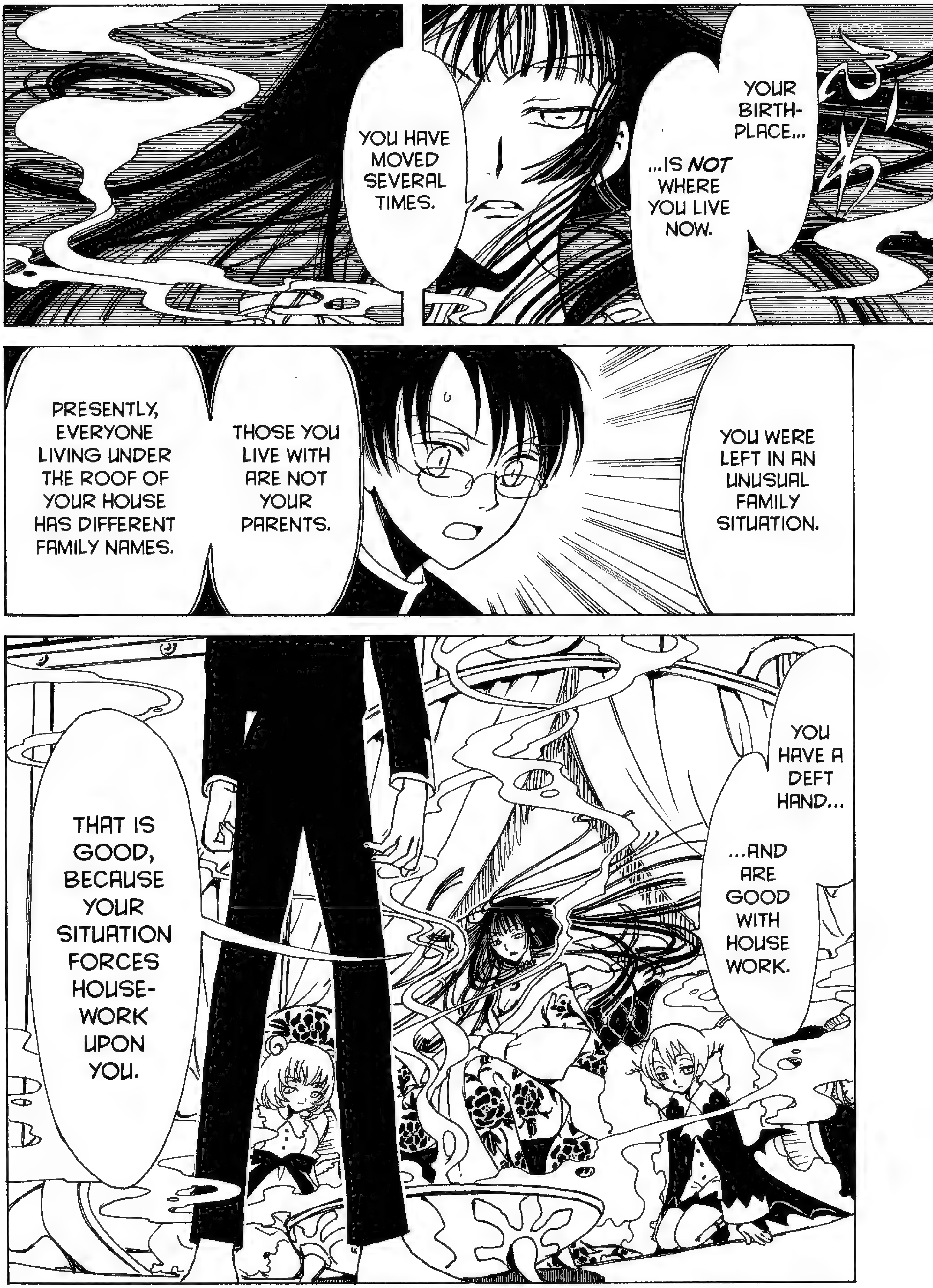

YOU WISH TO KNOW MY NAME?
NO, I WASN'T ASKING THAT—
IT'S YÛKO.
YÛKO ICHIHARA.
チウ❤
SMAK
AND YET, YOU TELL ME ANYWAY.
OF COURSE, THAT IS AN ASSUMED NAME.
ふふ
HO HO
ZACKT
AND YOU *LIE* ABOUT IT, TOO!
AND THESE CHILDREN ARE…
…MARU…
… AND …
…MORO.


BY THE WAY, THEIR FULL NAMES ARE…
MARU-DASHI AND MORO-DASHI.
CUTE NAMES, DON'T YOU THINK?
HO HO HO
HO HO
かわいい!
かわいい!
CUTE!
CUTE!
THEY ARE NOT CUTE NAMES!!
I'VE HAD IT!
YOU GUYS MAKE NO SENSE, SO IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME!
TMP TMP
WRL
ARE YOU GOING HOME?
ARE YOU GOING HOME?
I'M NOT HERE BECAUSE I *WANTED* TO BE!
SSHU UNKK

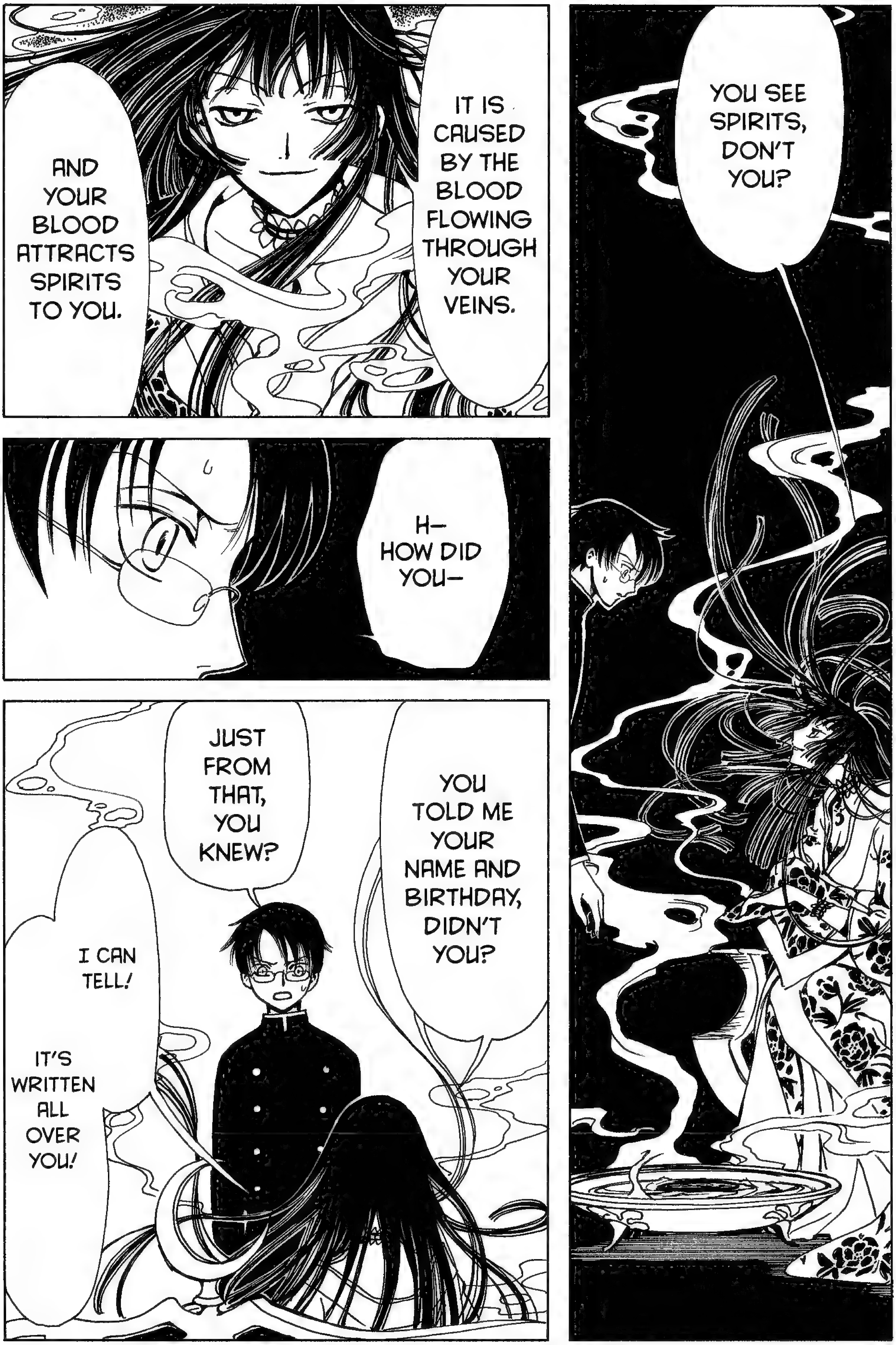

I TOLD YOU ONCE.
"HITSUZEN."
THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS COINCIDENCE IN THIS WORLD.
THE ONLY THING...
...IS HITSUZEN!

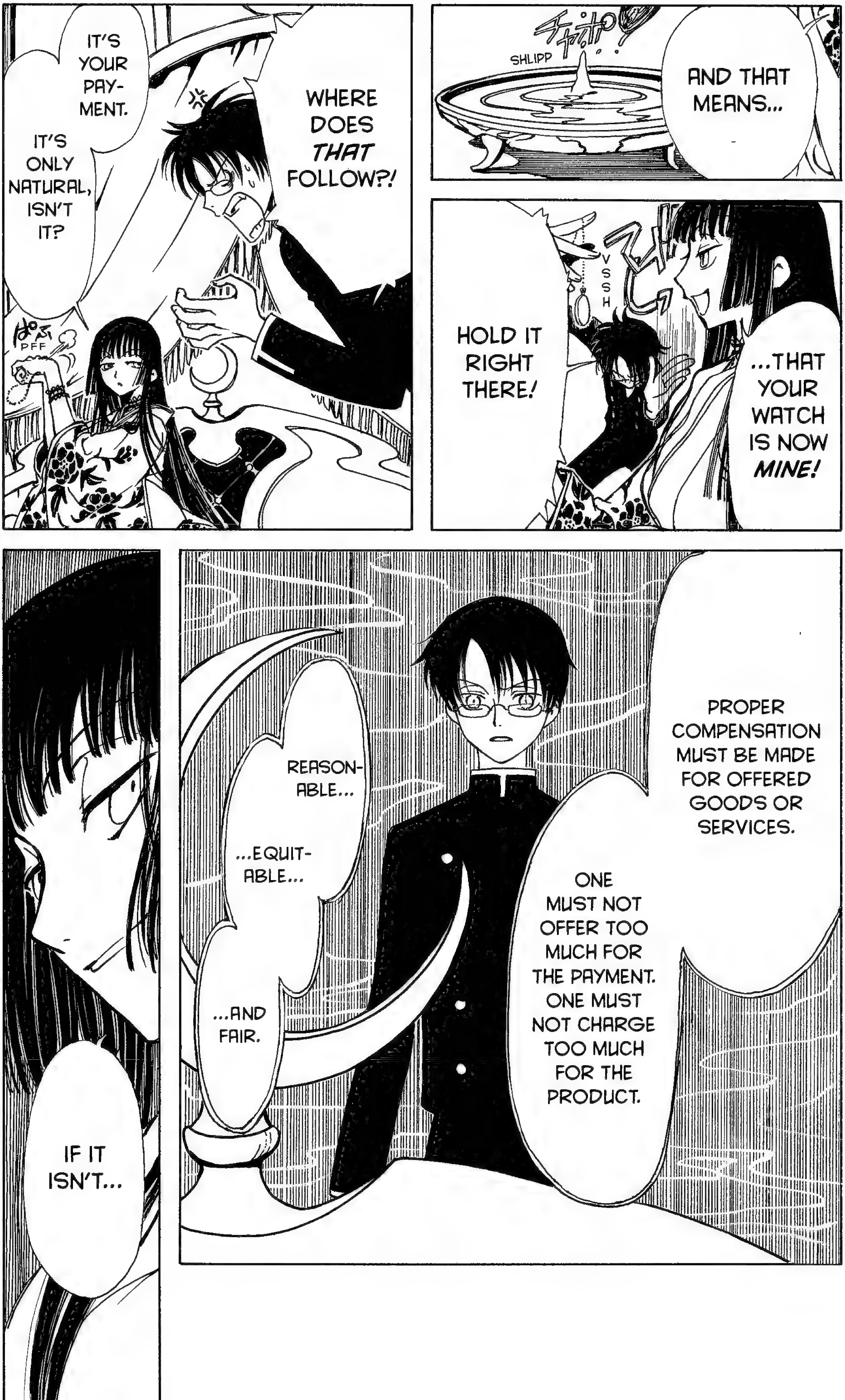

YOUR FACE SAYS YOU DO NOT BELIEVE.
TMP TMP
VERY WELL.
YOU HAVE SOMETHING IN YOUR POCKET.
PULL IT OUT.
EXCUSE ME?
DON'T ARGUE! *PULL IT OUT!*
SHFFL SHFFL
CHINK
A FINE WATCH.
IT HAS COUNTED FIFTY YEARS SINCE IT STARTED.
WITH THIS...
AH, BUT NEVER MIND. THIS WILL DO.
SST

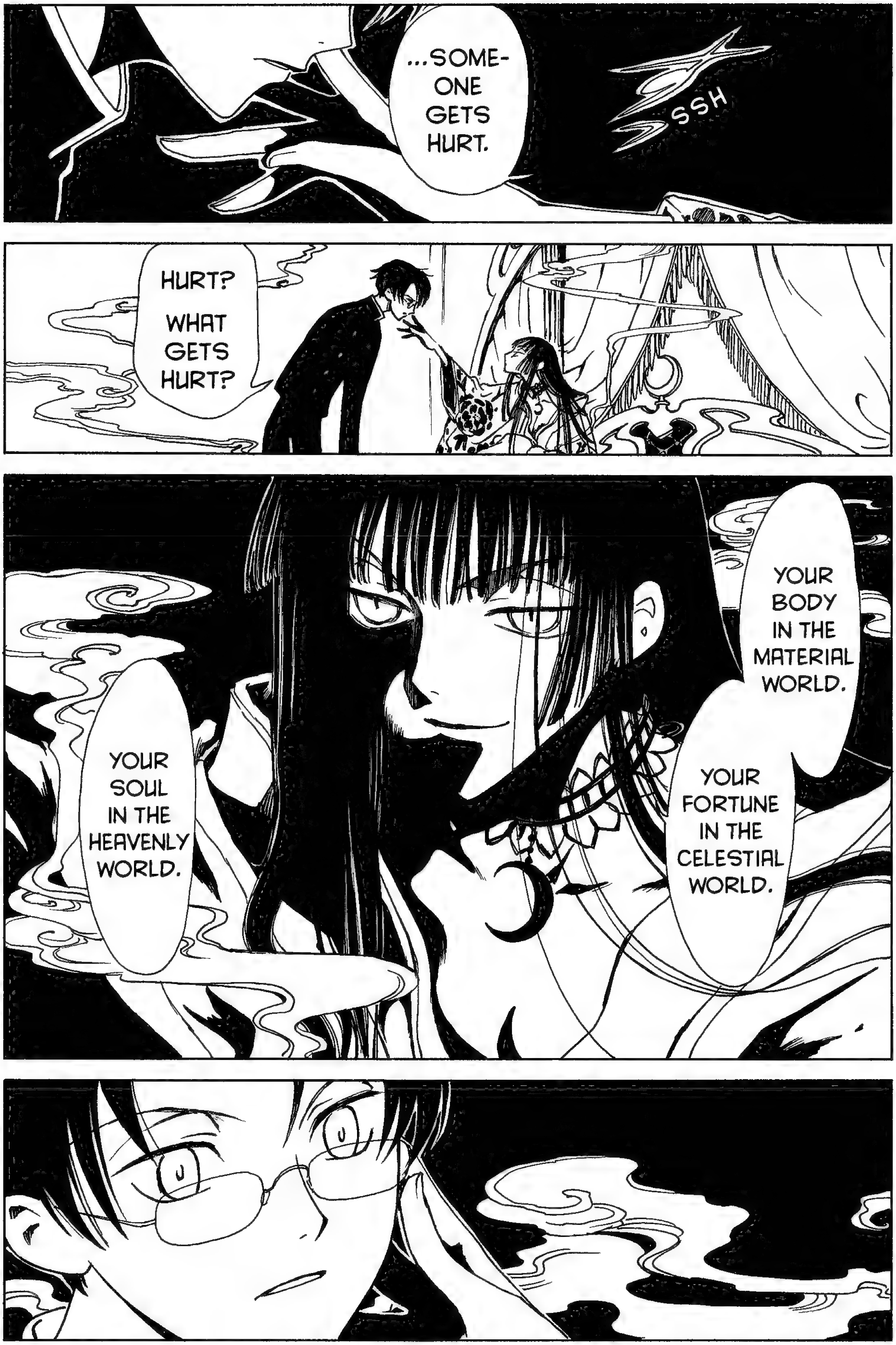

PLASH
SHF
SSP
BLOOB
ZLOOM
クル
ZLOOM
クル クル
KIMIHIRO WATANUKI …
KEE-MEE-HEE-ROH WAH-TAH-NOO-KEE …

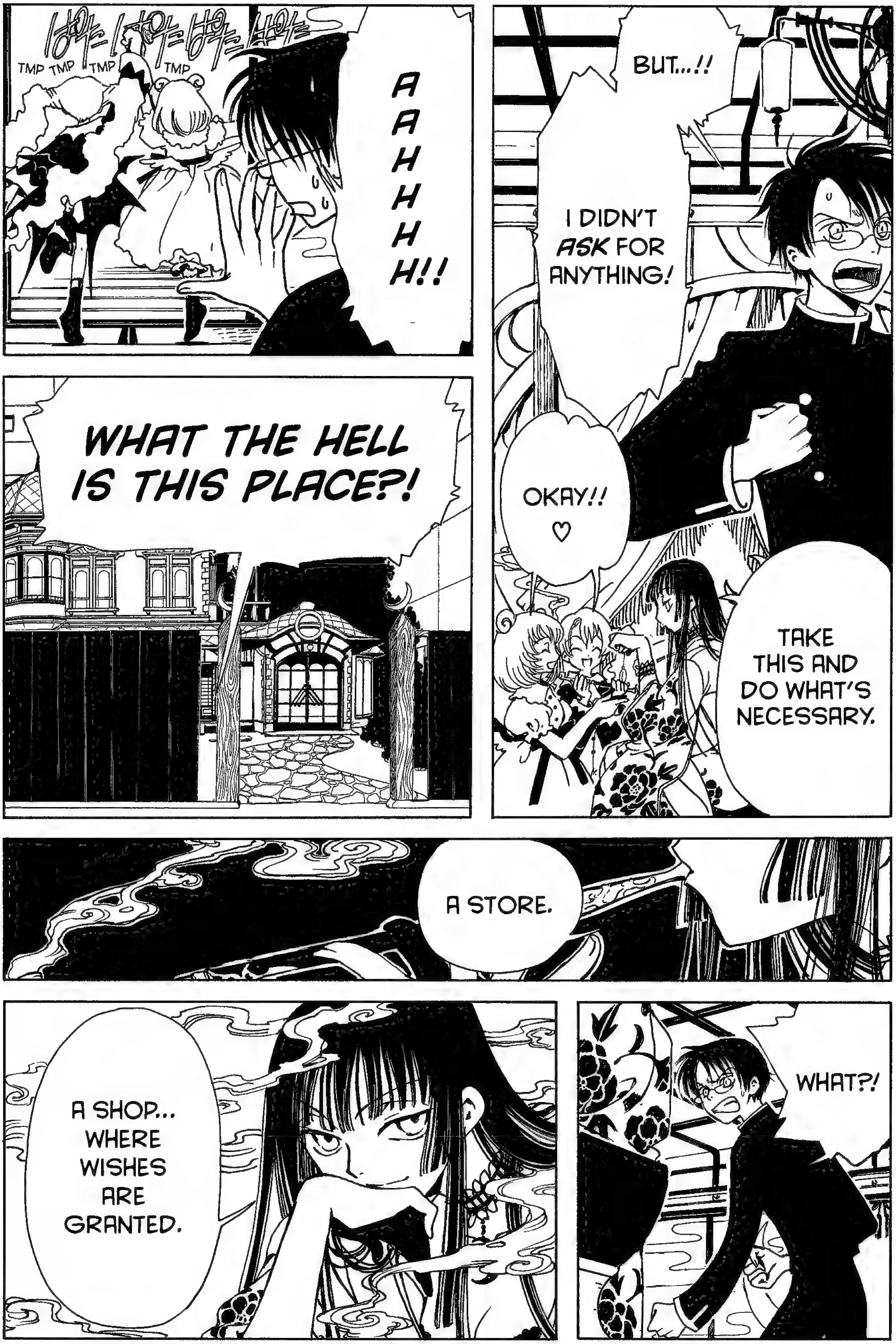

WHOOO
ふわ
YOUR BIRTHPLACE...
...IS *NOT* WHERE YOU LIVE NOW.
YOU HAVE MOVED SEVERAL TIMES.
YOU WERE LEFT IN AN UNUSUAL FAMILY SITUATION.
THOSE YOU LIVE WITH ARE NOT YOUR PARENTS.
PRESENTLY, EVERYONE LIVING UNDER THE ROOF OF YOUR HOUSE HAS DIFFERENT FAMILY NAMES.
YOU HAVE A DEFT HAND...
...AND ARE GOOD WITH HOUSE WORK.
THAT IS GOOD, BECAUSE YOUR SITUATION FORCES HOUSEWORK UPON YOU.

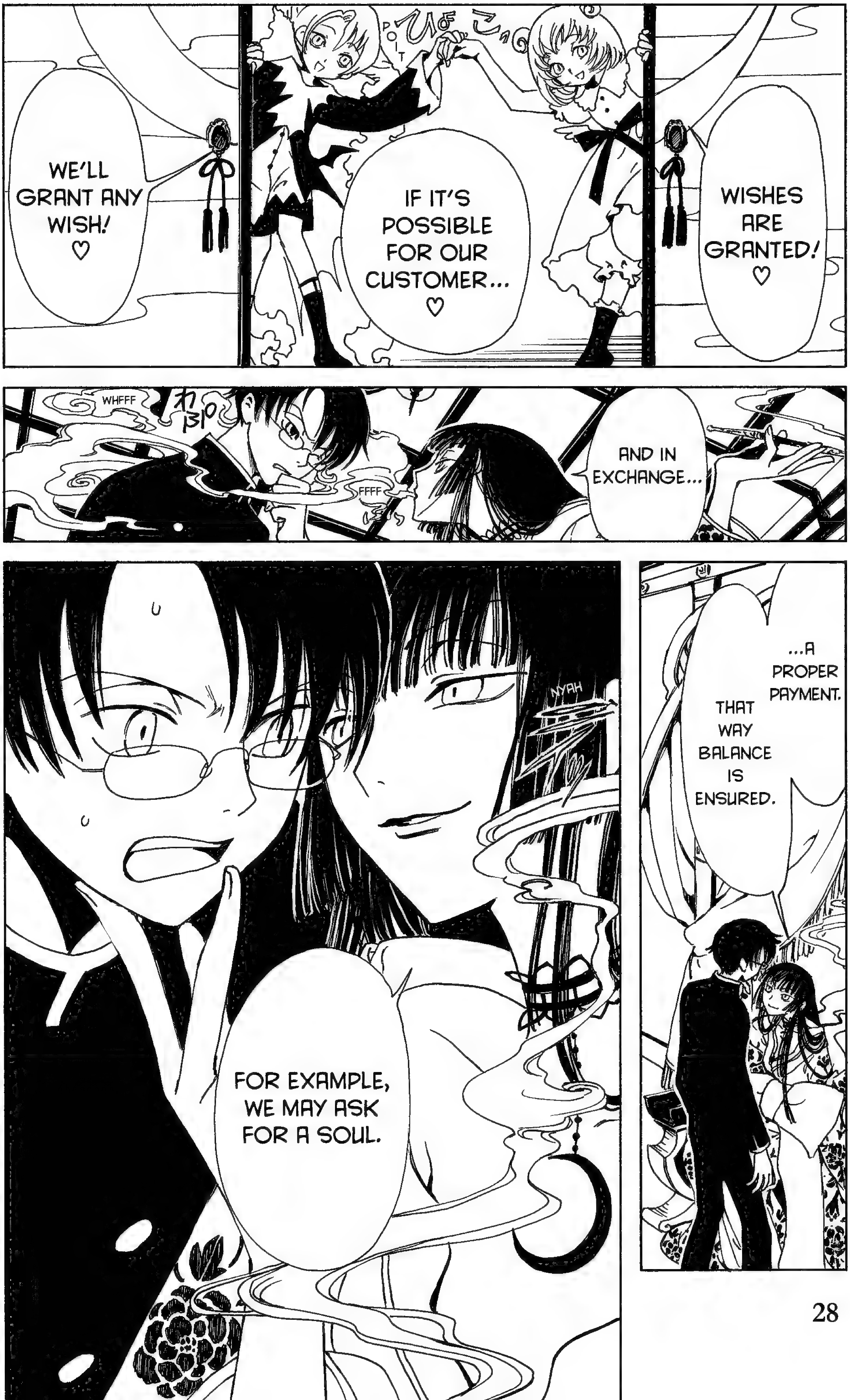
NOW...
OR RATHER, SINCE CHILDHOOD, YOU HAVE HAD A WORRY.
AND SINCE IT IS A PART OF YOUR FAMILY HERITAGE, YOU CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT IT.
SHHHHHHHHHH
AND, IT IS A WORRY THAT HAS TO DO WITH THE OCCULT.
YOU...

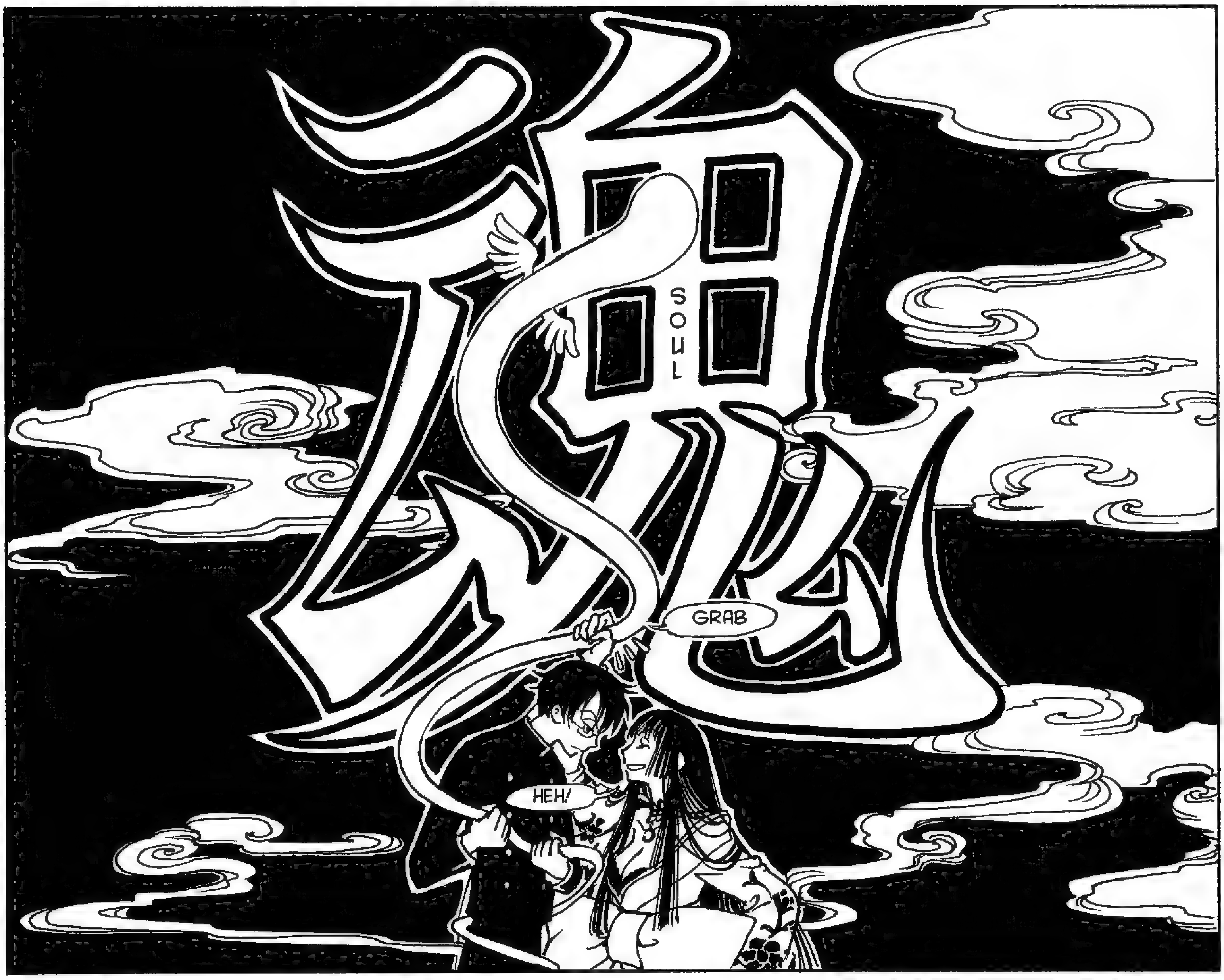

YOU SEE SPIRITS, DON'T YOU?
IT IS CAUSED BY THE BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH YOUR VEINS.
AND YOUR BLOOD ATTRACTS SPIRITS TO YOU.
H— HOW DID YOU—
YOU TOLD ME YOUR NAME AND BIRTHDAY, DIDN'T YOU?
JUST FROM THAT, YOU KNEW?
I CAN TELL! IT'S WRITTEN ALL OVER YOU!

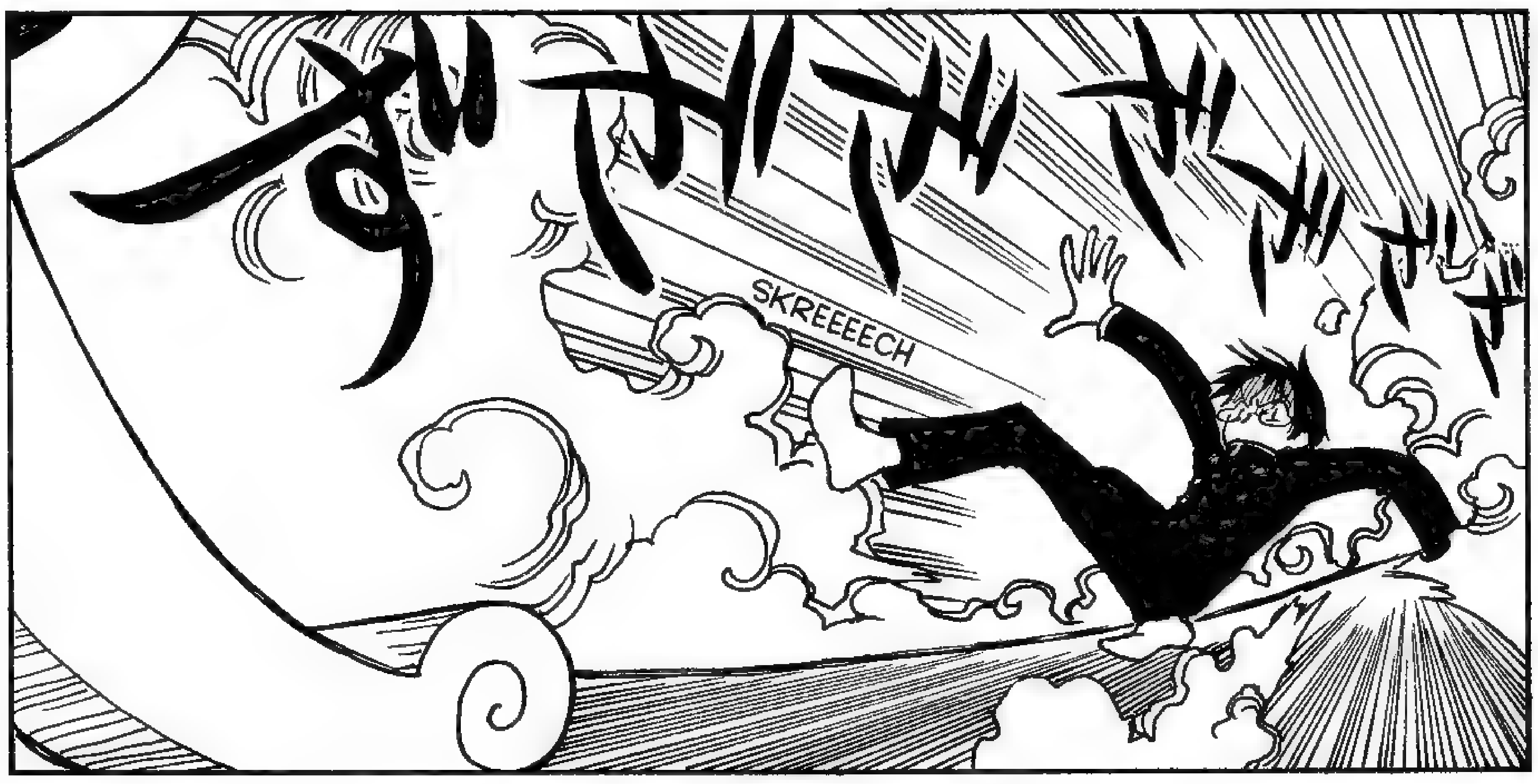

SHLIPP
AND THAT MEANS...
...THAT YOUR WATCH IS NOW *MINE!*
VSSH
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
WHERE DOES *THAT* FOLLOW?!
IT'S YOUR PAYMENT.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL, ISN'T IT?
PFF
PROPER COMPENSATION MUST BE MADE FOR OFFERED GOODS OR SERVICES.
ONE MUST NOT OFFER TOO MUCH FOR THE PAYMENT. ONE MUST NOT CHARGE TOO MUCH FOR THE PRODUCT.
REASONABLE...
...EQUITABLE...
...AND FAIR.
IF IT ISN'T...

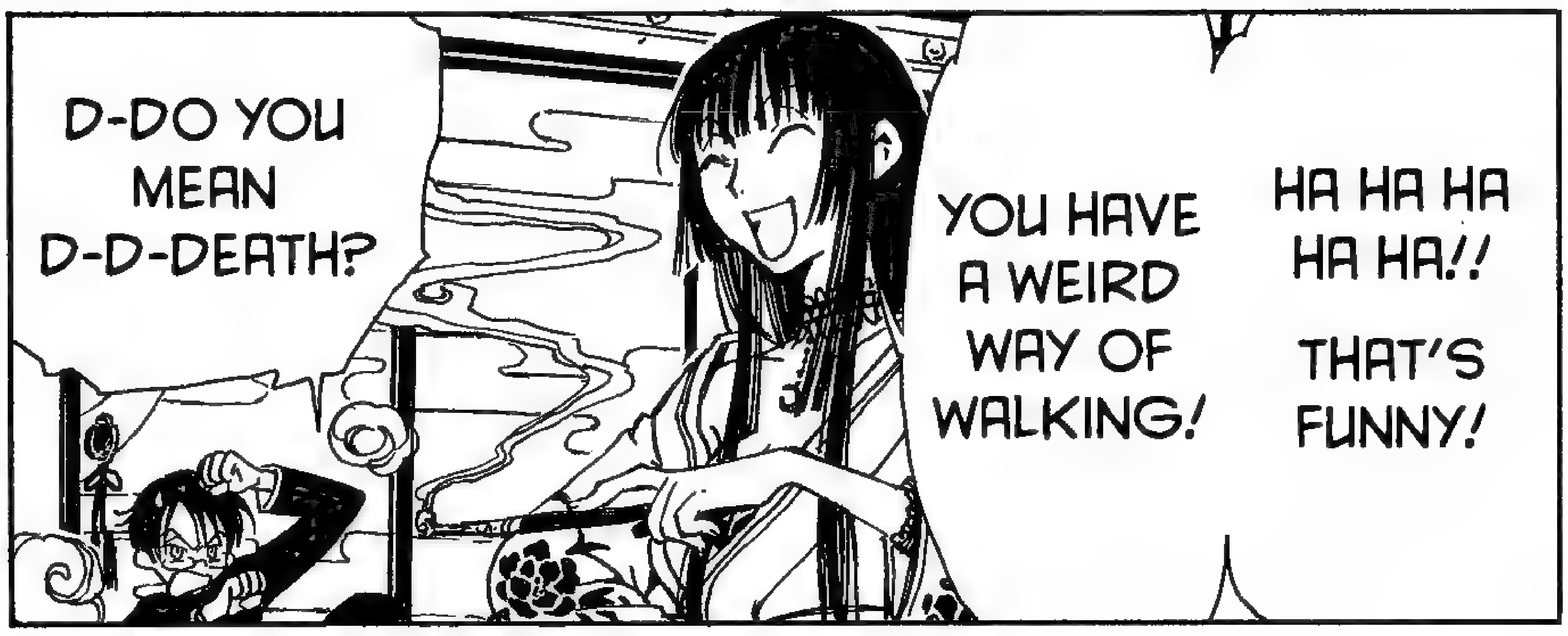

SSH
...SOMEONE GETS HURT.
HURT?
WHAT GETS HURT?
YOUR BODY IN THE MATERIAL WORLD.
YOUR FORTUNE IN THE CELESTIAL WORLD.
YOUR SOUL IN THE HEAVENLY WORLD.

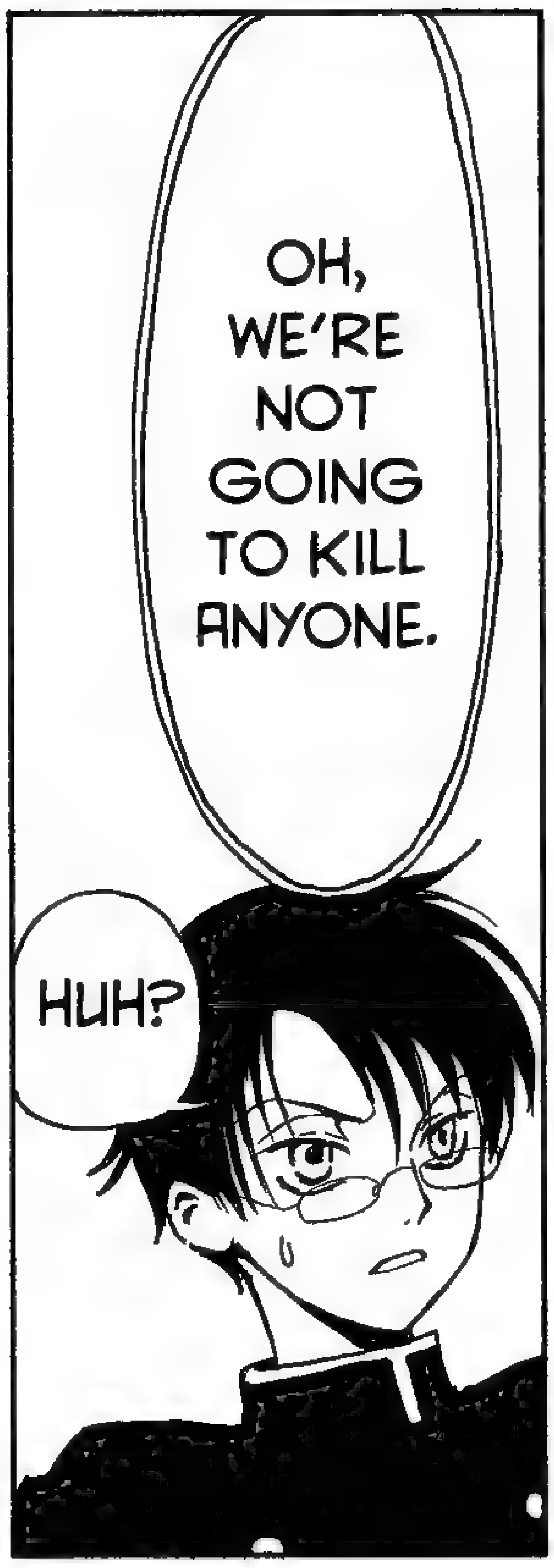

BUT...!!
I DIDN'T *ASK* FOR ANYTHING!
OKAY!! ♡
TAKE THIS AND DO WHAT'S NECESSARY.
TMP TMP TMP TMP
AAHHHHH!!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PLACE?!
A STORE.
WHAT?!
A SHOP... WHERE WISHES ARE GRANTED.

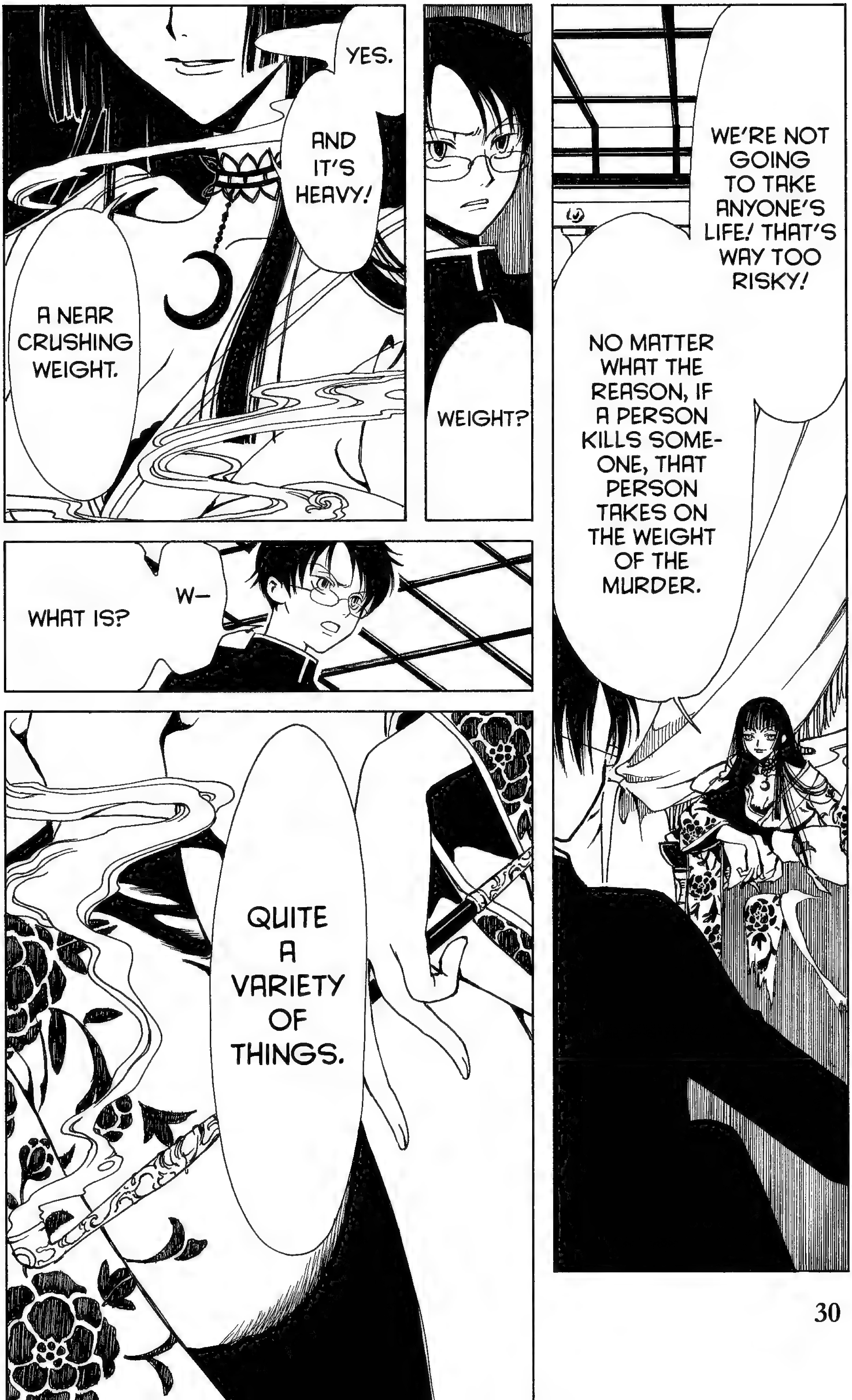

WISHES ARE GRANTED! ♡
IF IT'S POSSIBLE FOR OUR CUSTOMER... ♡
POIT
WE'LL GRANT ANY WISH! ♡
AND IN EXCHANGE...
FFFF
WHFFF
...A PROPER PAYMENT.
THAT WAY BALANCE IS ENSURED.
NYAH
FOR EXAMPLE, WE MAY ASK FOR A SOUL.

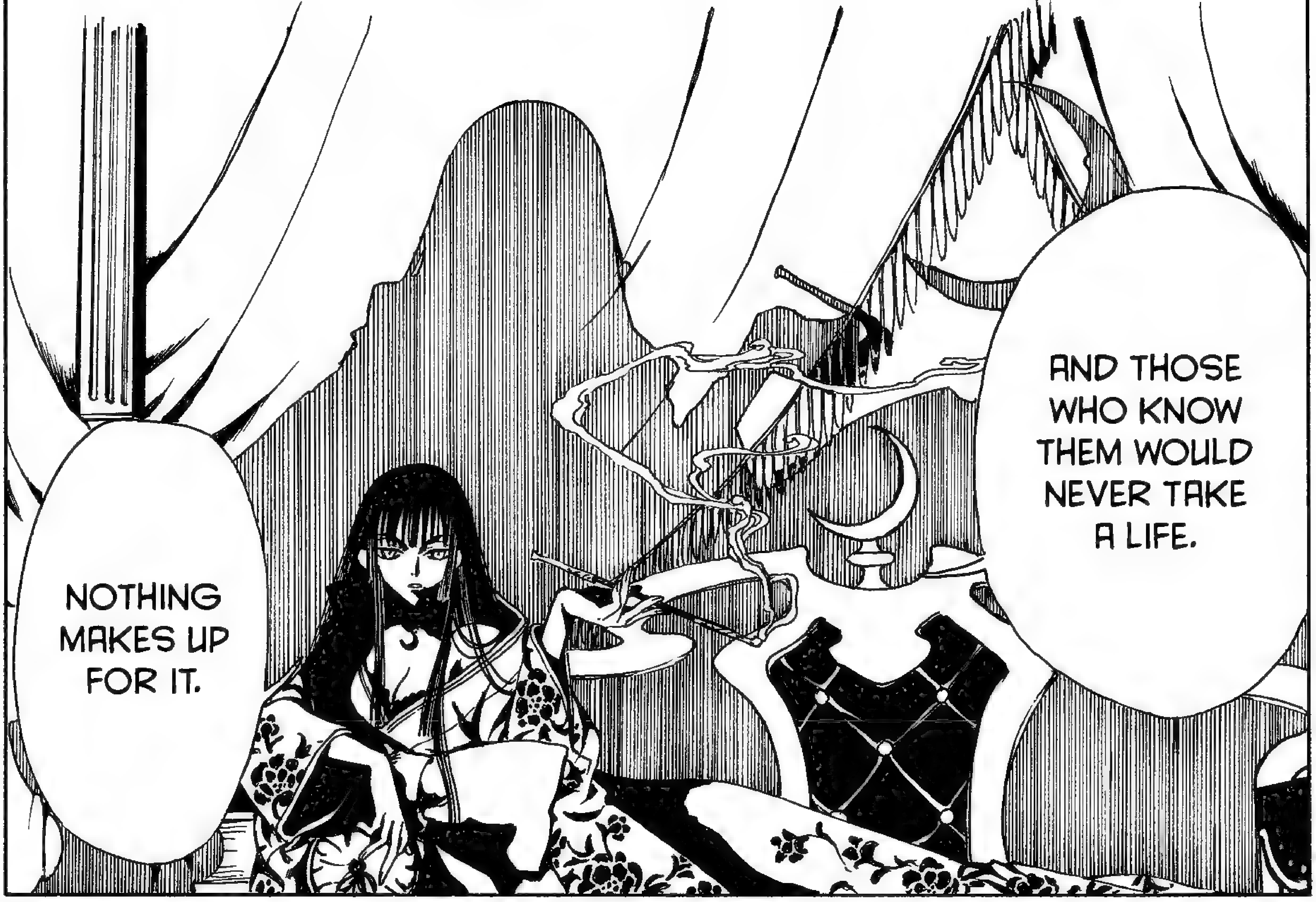

SOUL
GRAB
HEH!

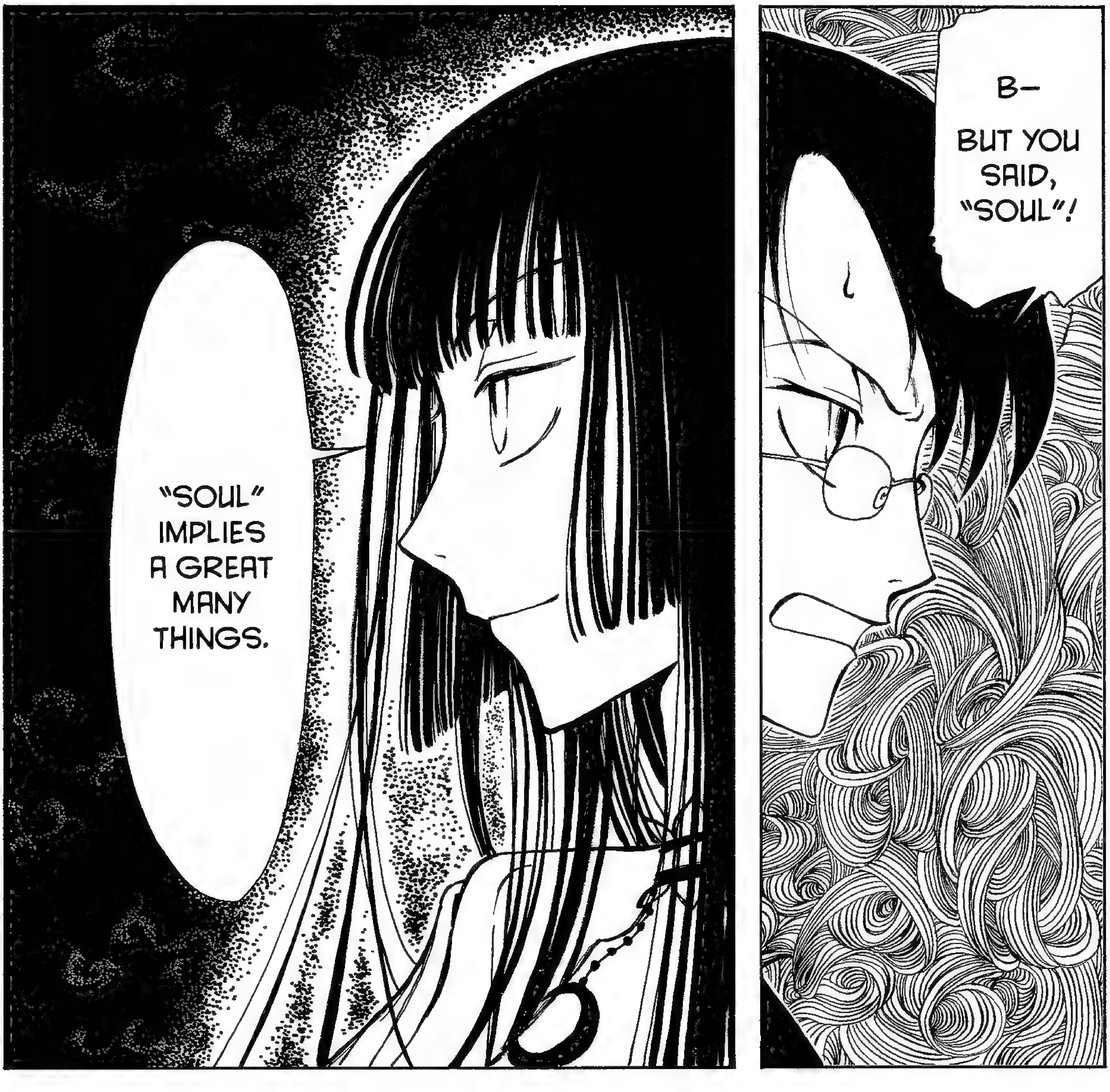

SKREEEECH

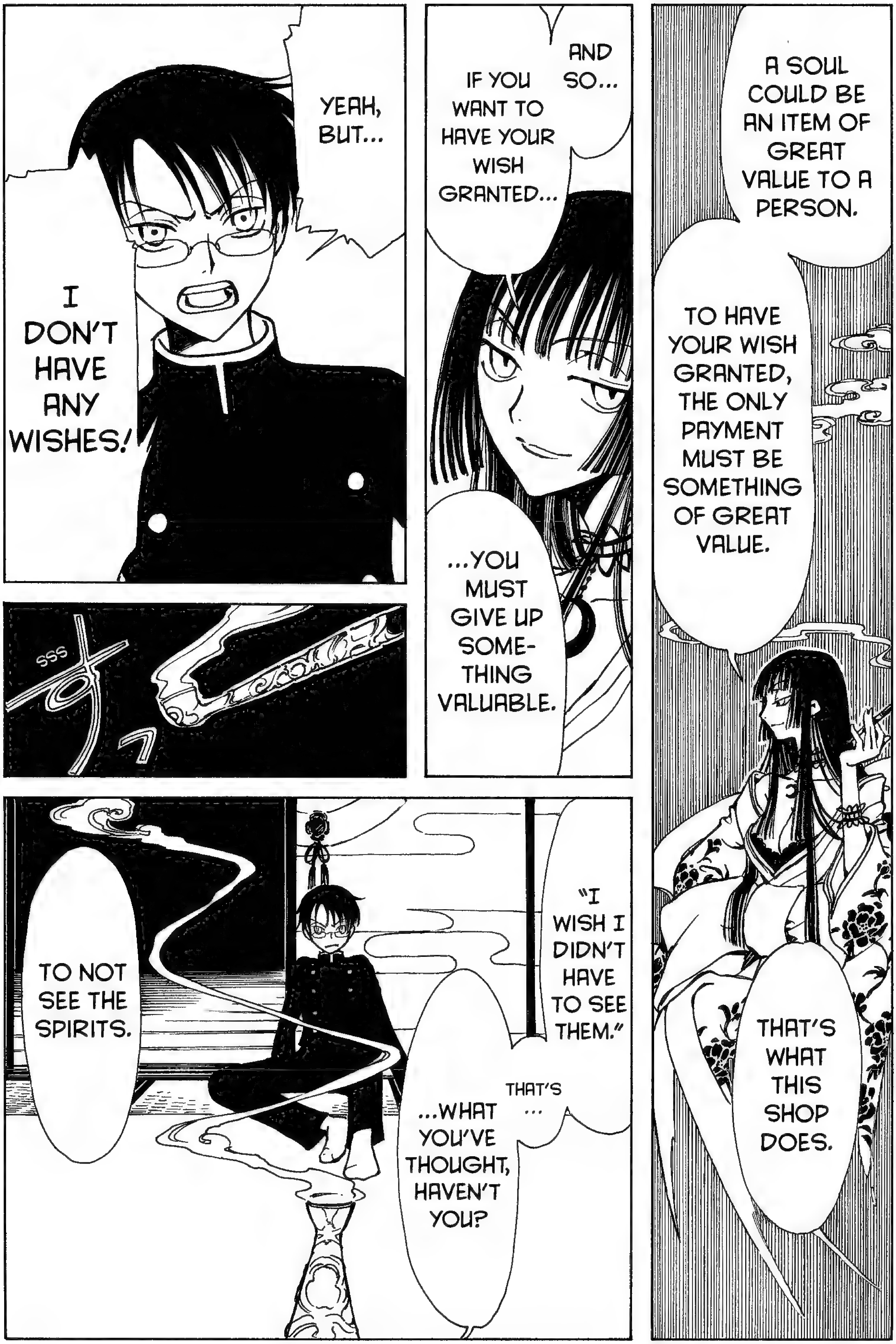

HA HA HA HA HA!! THAT'S FUNNY!
YOU HAVE A WEIRD WAY OF WALKING!
D-DO YOU MEAN D-D-DEATH?

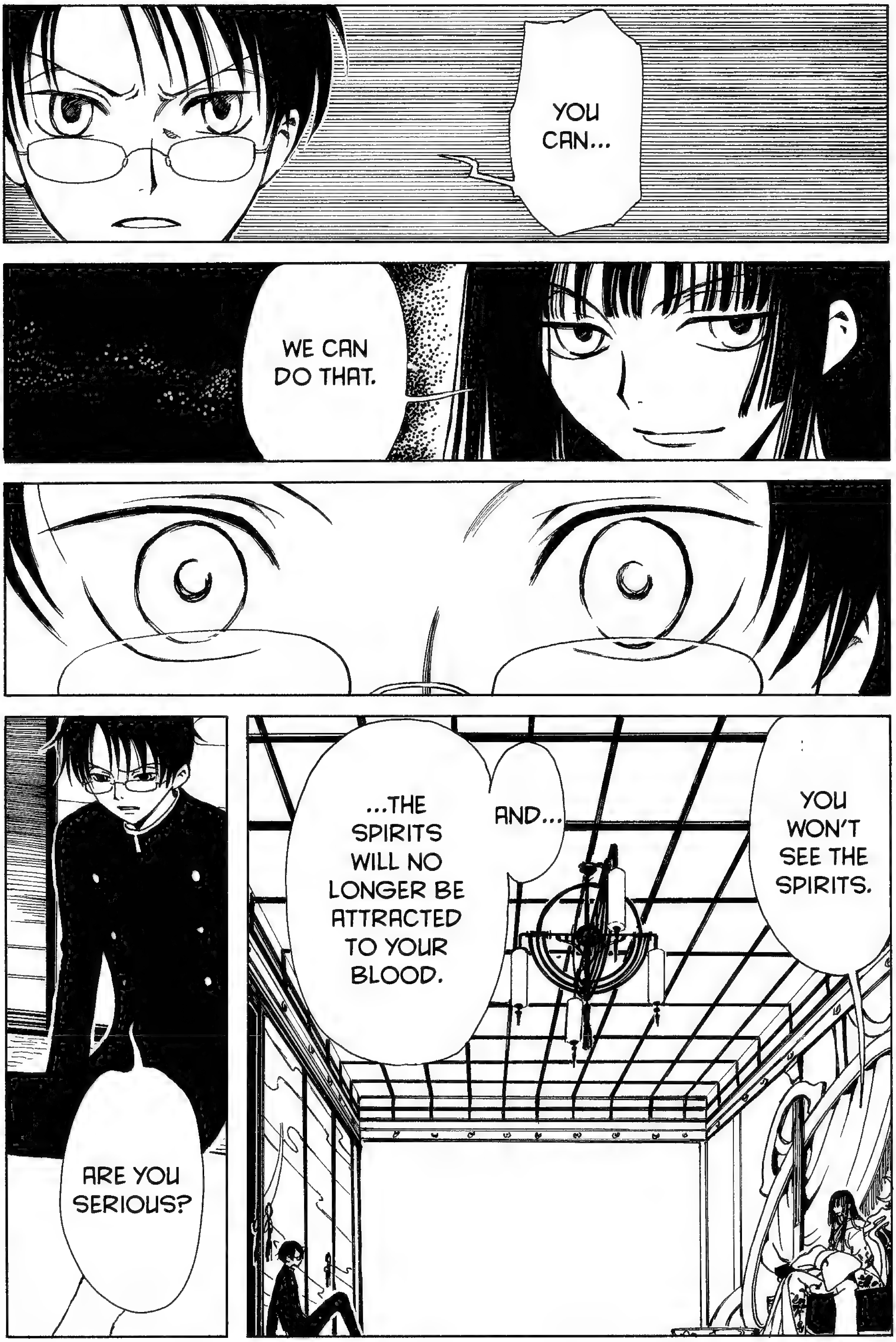

OH, WE'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ANYONE.
HUH?

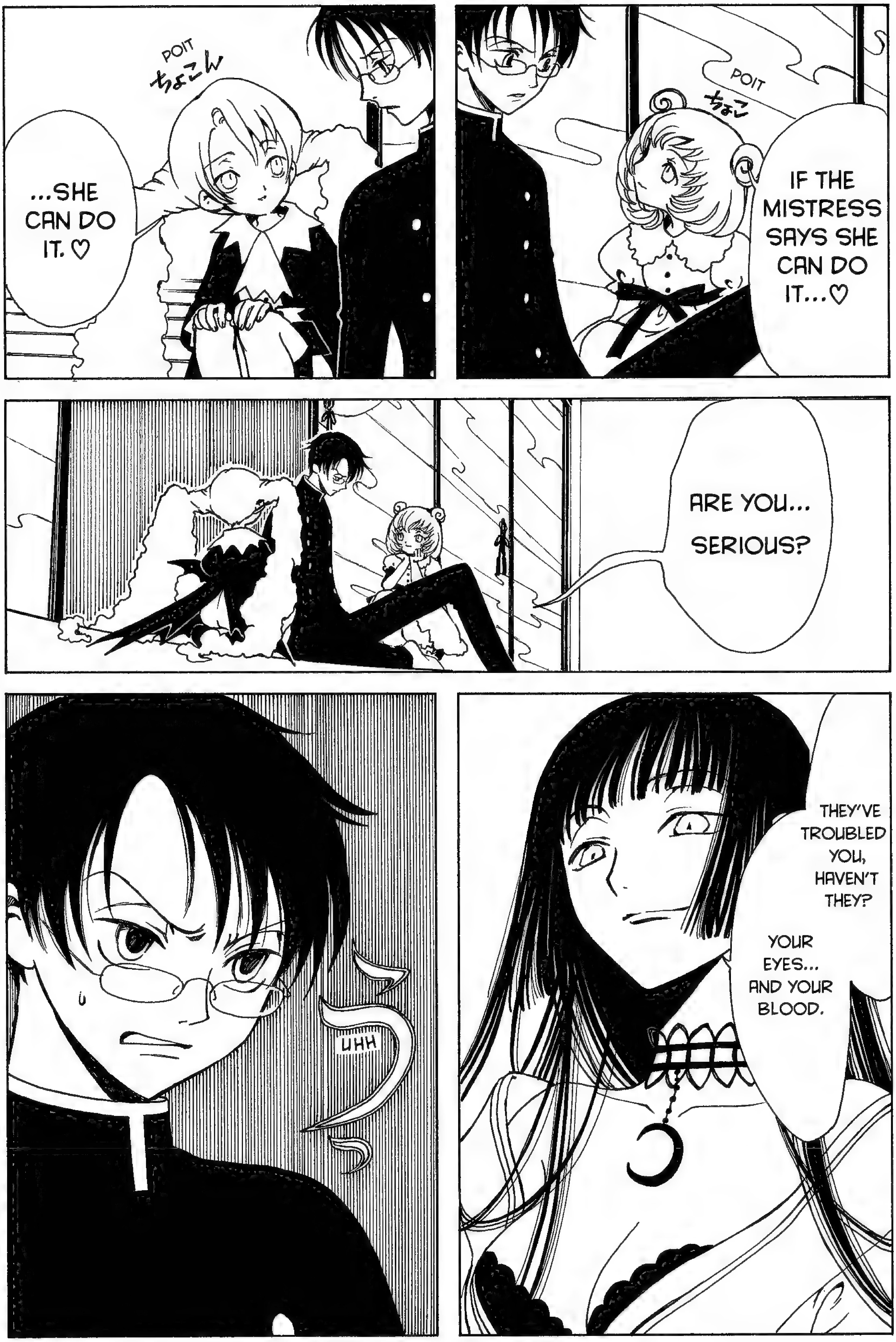

WE'RE NOT GOING TO TAKE ANYONE'S LIFE! THAT'S WAY TOO RISKY!
NO MATTER WHAT THE REASON, IF A PERSON KILLS SOMEONE, THAT PERSON TAKES ON THE WEIGHT OF THE MURDER.
WEIGHT?
YES.
AND IT'S HEAVY!
A NEAR CRUSHING WEIGHT.
W—
WHAT IS?
QUITE A VARIETY OF THINGS.

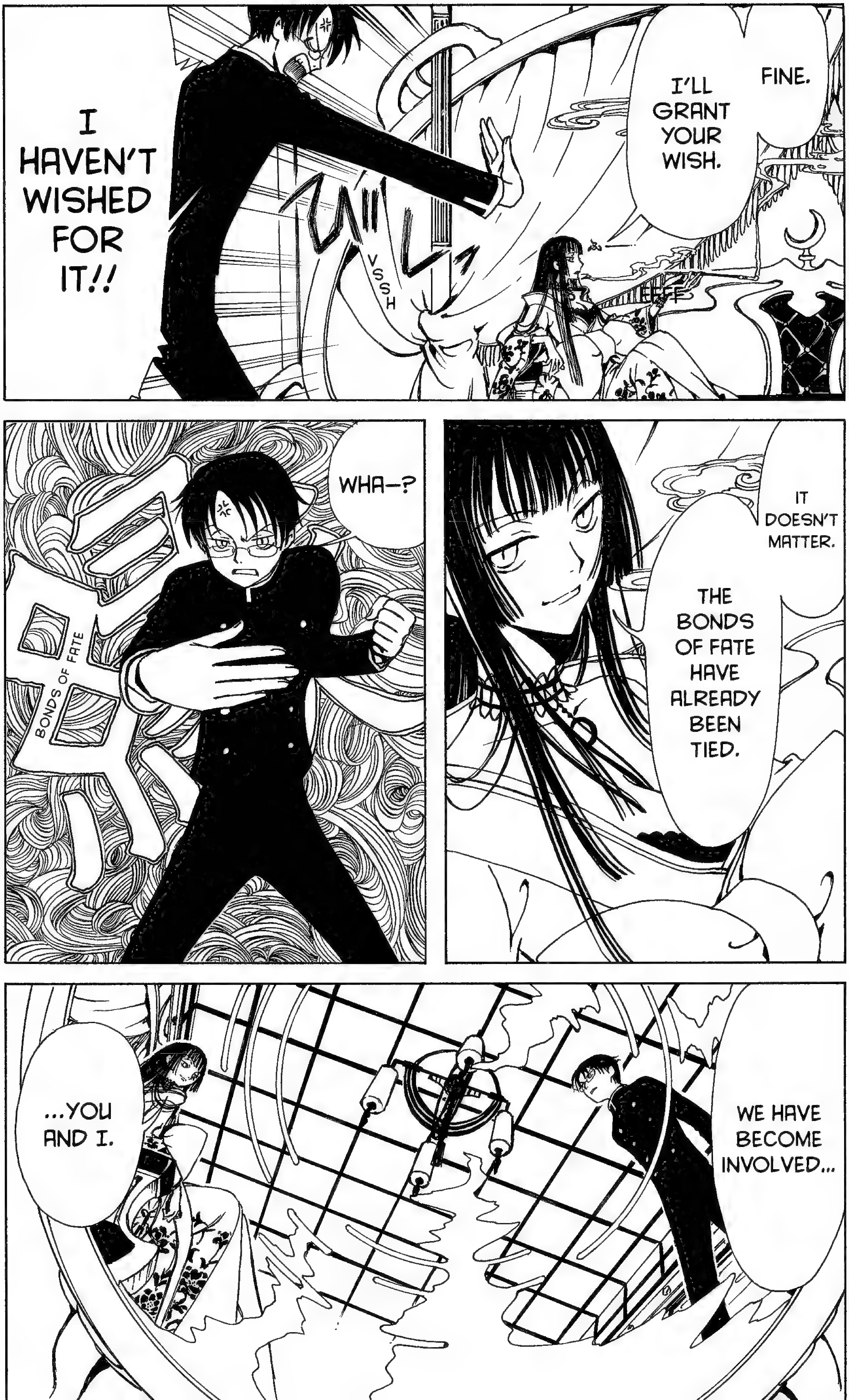

AND THOSE WHO KNOW THEM WOULD NEVER TAKE A LIFE.
NOTHING MAKES UP FOR IT.

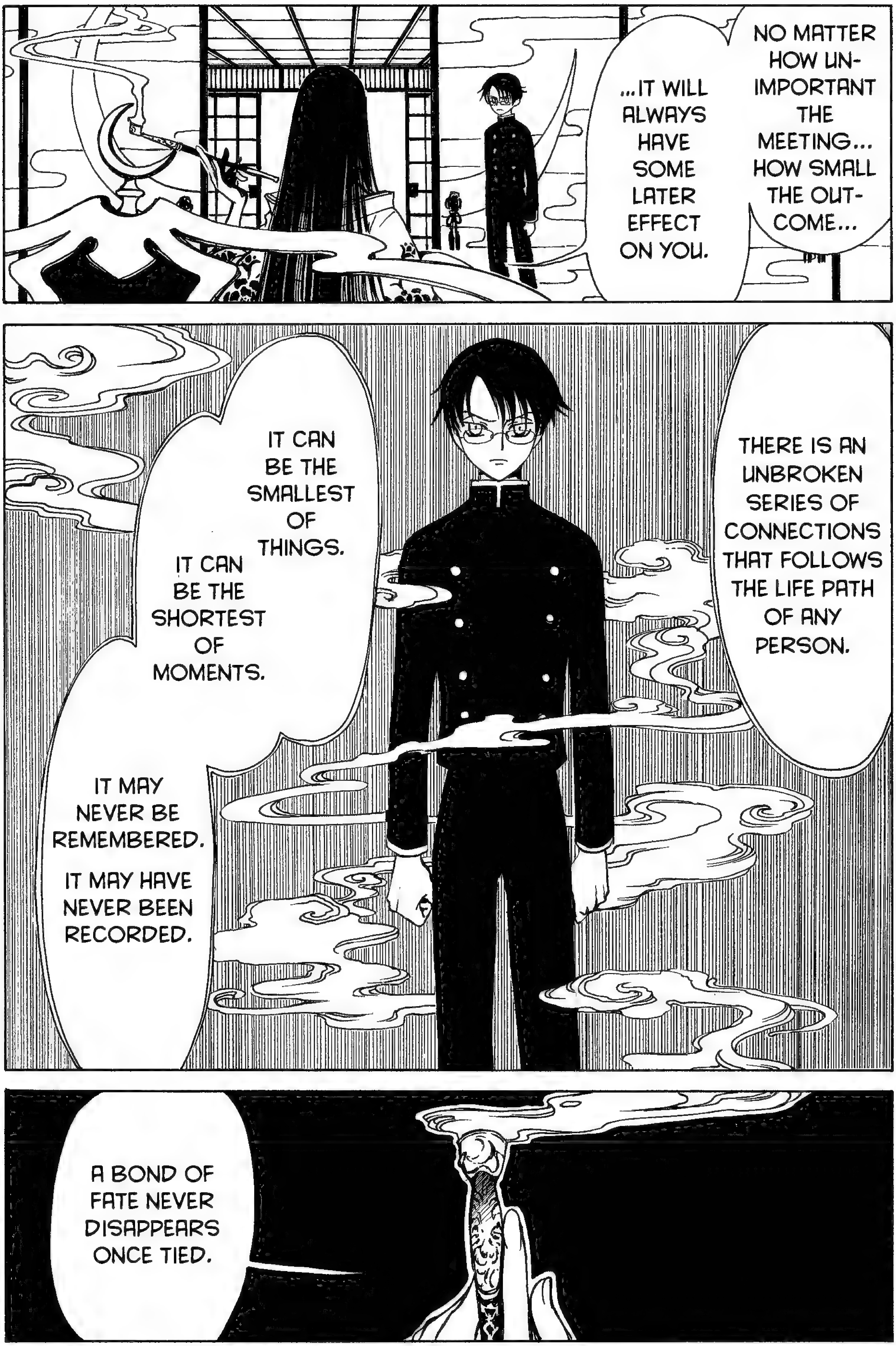

B–
BUT YOU SAID, "SOUL"!
"SOUL" IMPLIES A GREAT MANY THINGS.

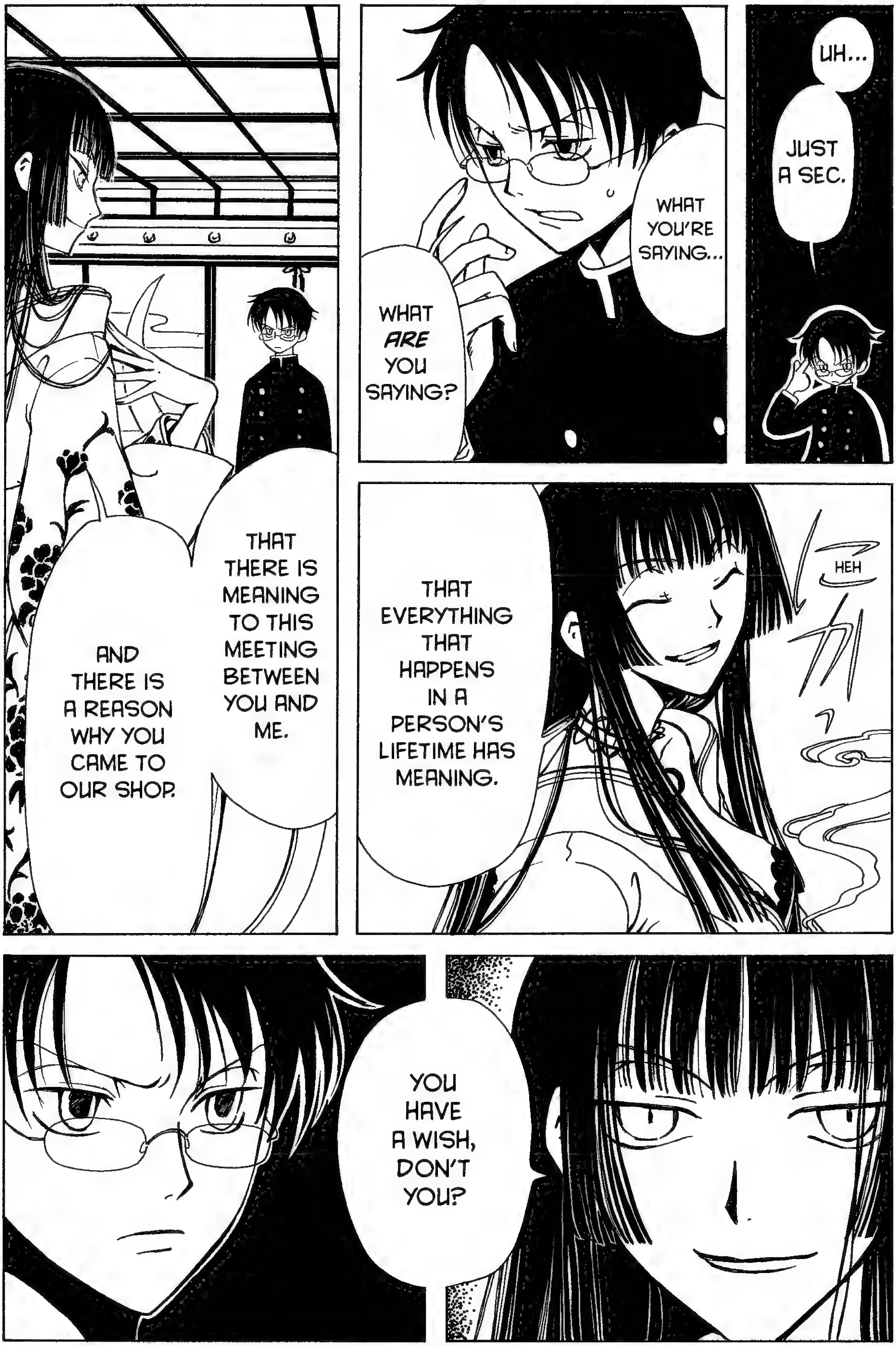

A SOUL COULD BE AN ITEM OF GREAT VALUE TO A PERSON.
TO HAVE YOUR WISH GRANTED, THE ONLY PAYMENT MUST BE SOMETHING OF GREAT VALUE.
THAT'S WHAT THIS SHOP DOES.
AND SO...
IF YOU WANT TO HAVE YOUR WISH GRANTED...
...YOU MUST GIVE UP SOME-THING VALUABLE.
YEAH, BUT...
I DON'T HAVE ANY WISHES!
SSS
"I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO SEE THEM."
THAT'S ...
...WHAT YOU'VE THOUGHT, HAVEN'T YOU?
TO NOT SEE THE SPIRITS.

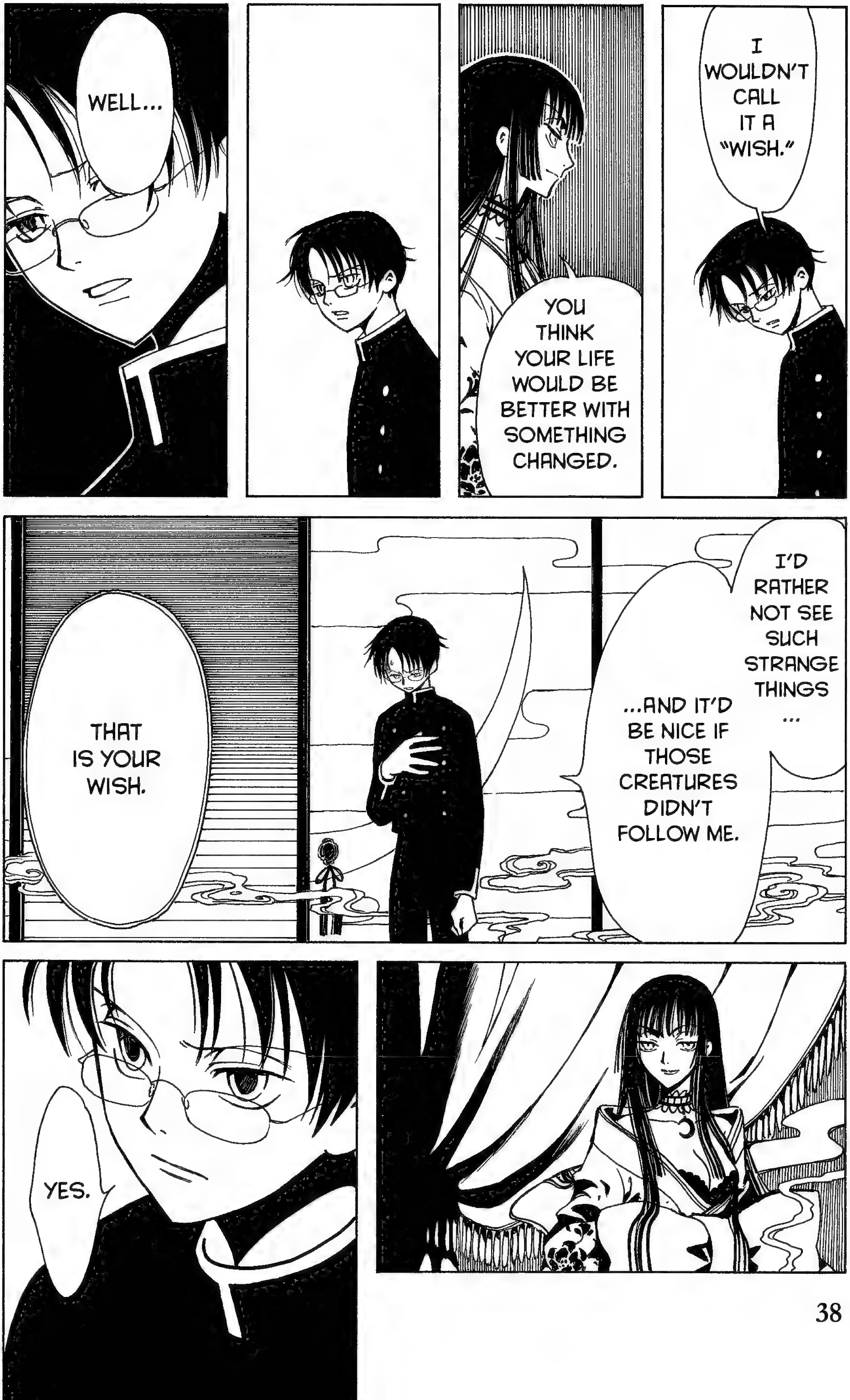

YOU CAN...
WE CAN DO THAT.
YOU WON'T SEE THE SPIRITS.
AND...
...THE SPIRITS WILL NO LONGER BE ATTRACTED TO YOUR BLOOD.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?


POIT
ちょこ
IF THE MISTRESS SAYS SHE CAN DO IT...♡
POIT
ちょこん
...SHE CAN DO IT. ♡
ARE YOU... SERIOUS?
THEY'VE TROUBLED YOU, HAVEN'T THEY?
YOUR EYES... AND YOUR BLOOD.
UHH

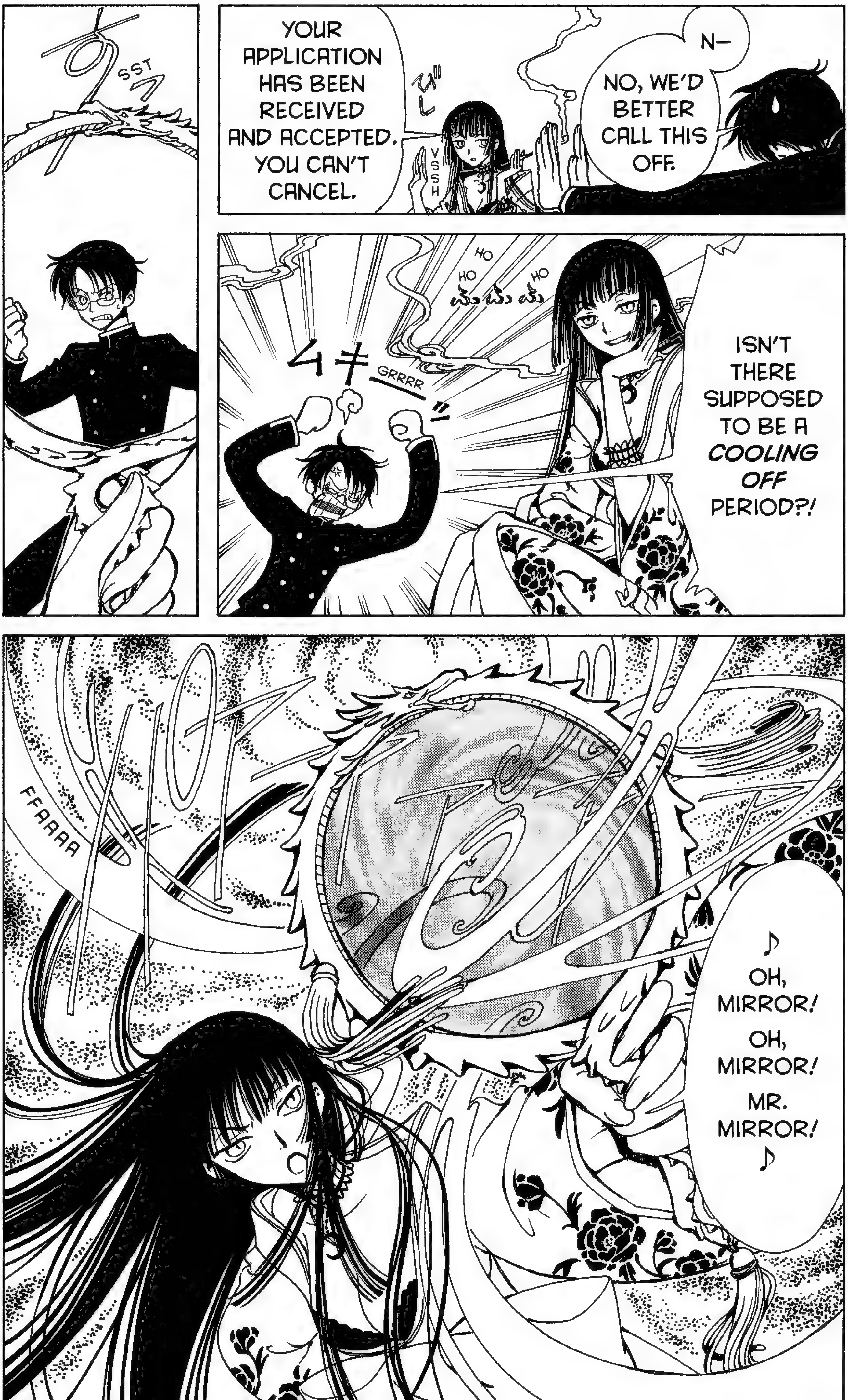

FINE.
I'LL GRANT YOUR WISH.
I HAVEN'T WISHED FOR IT!!
VSSH
EFFF
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THE BONDS OF FATE HAVE ALREADY BEEN TIED.
WHA–?
BONDS OF FATE
WE HAVE BECOME INVOLVED...
...YOU AND I.


NO MATTER HOW UNIMPORTANT THE MEETING... HOW SMALL THE OUTCOME...
...IT WILL ALWAYS HAVE SOME LATER EFFECT ON YOU.
THERE IS AN UNBROKEN SERIES OF CONNECTIONS THAT FOLLOWS THE LIFE PATH OF ANY PERSON.
IT CAN BE THE SMALLEST OF THINGS.
IT CAN BE THE SHORTEST OF MOMENTS.
IT MAY NEVER BE REMEMBERED.
IT MAY HAVE NEVER BEEN RECORDED.
A BOND OF FATE NEVER DISAPPEARS ONCE TIED.

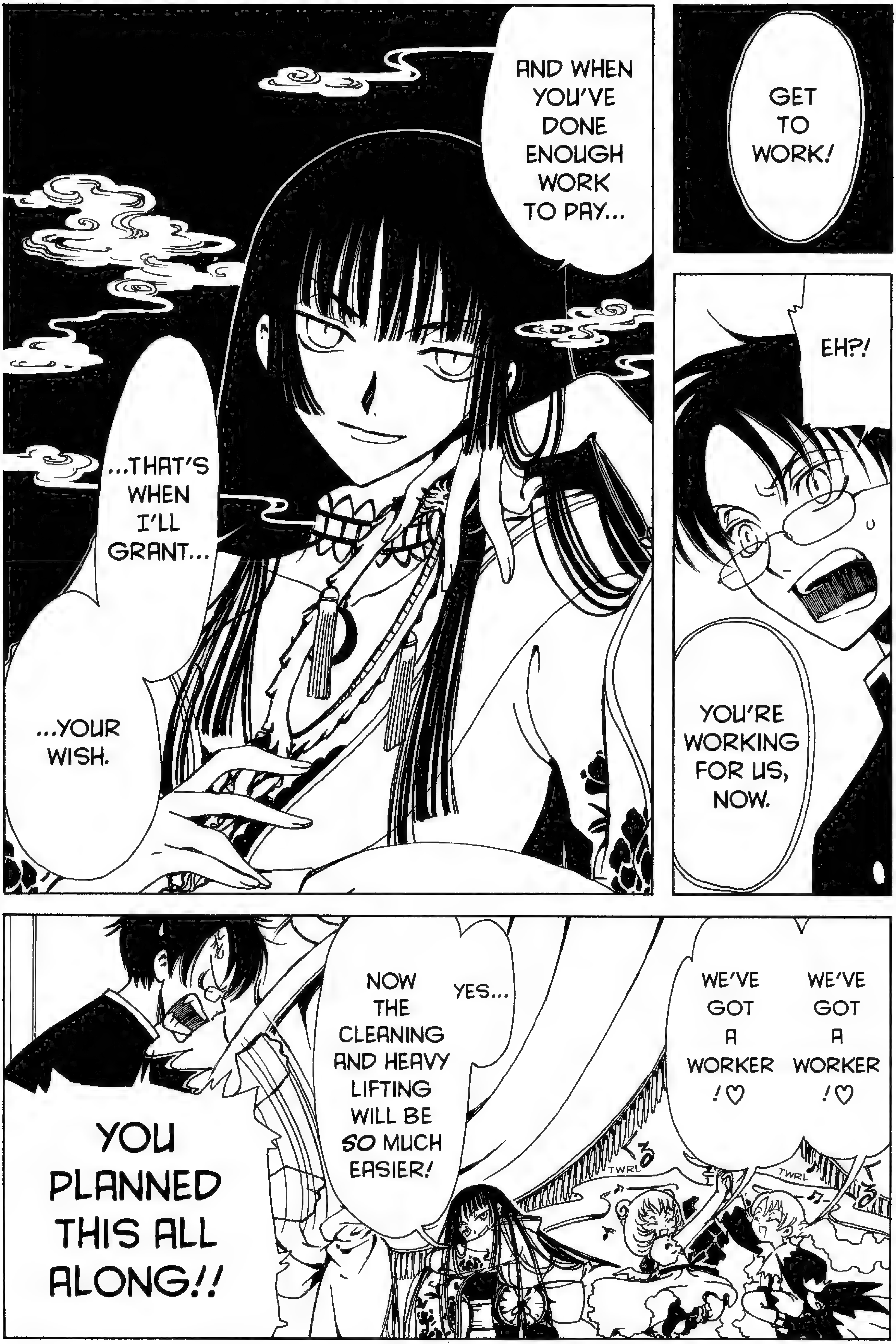

UH...
JUST A SEC.
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...
WHAT *ARE* YOU SAYING?
THAT EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS IN A PERSON'S LIFETIME HAS MEANING.
HEH
THAT THERE IS MEANING TO THIS MEETING BETWEEN YOU AND ME.
AND THERE IS A REASON WHY YOU CAME TO OUR SHOP.
YOU HAVE A WISH, DON'T YOU?


I WOULDN'T CALL IT A "WISH."
YOU THINK YOUR LIFE WOULD BE BETTER WITH SOMETHING CHANGED.
WELL...
I'D RATHER NOT SEE SUCH STRANGE THINGS ...
...AND IT'D BE NICE IF THOSE CREATURES DIDN'T FOLLOW ME.
THAT IS YOUR WISH.
YES.

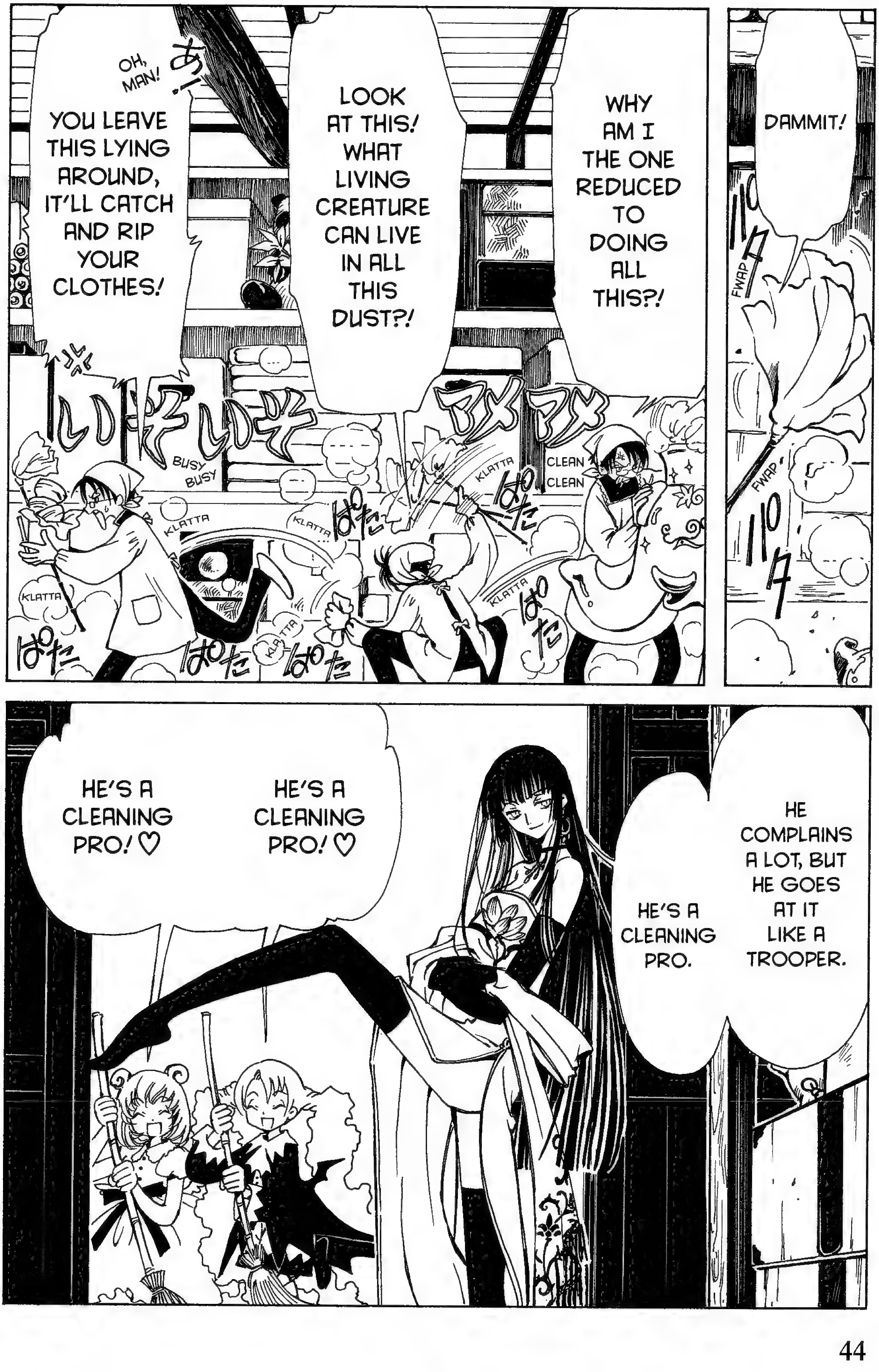
YOU HAVE A WISH...
...AND WE'LL GRANT IT.
NOW...
...ABOUT YOUR PAYMENT.
YOU JUST *SELL* THIS STUFF?!
THIS IS A SHOP. I *TOLD* YOU THAT!
I *TOLD* YOU THAT! ♡
I *TOLD* YOU THAT! ♡

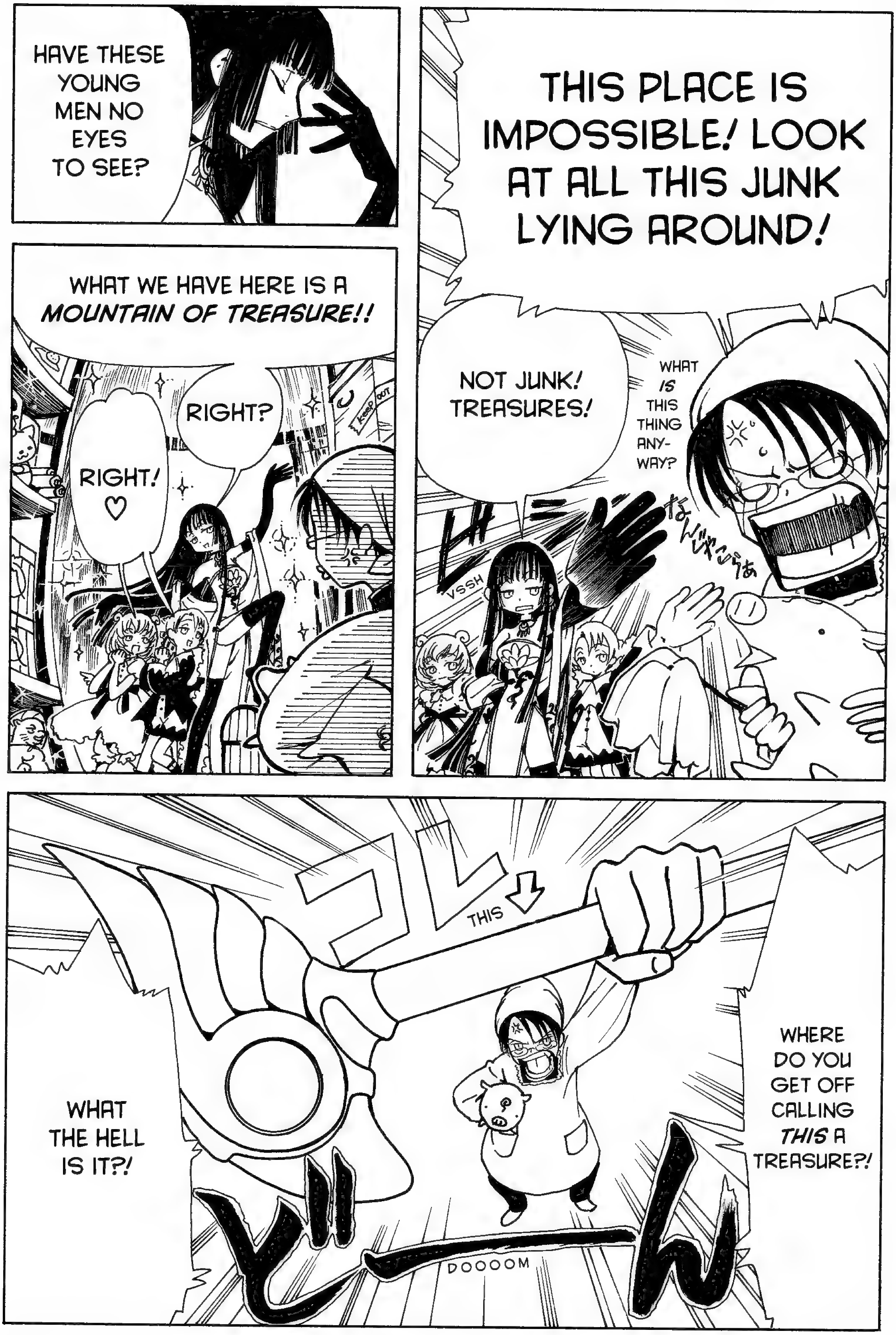

N—
NO, WE'D BETTER CALL THIS OFF.
YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED. YOU CAN'T CANCEL.
びし
VSSH
ISN'T THERE SUPPOSED TO BE A *COOLING OFF* PERIOD?!
ふふふ
HO HO HO
ムキ
GRRRR
す
SST
♪ OH, MIRROR! OH, MIRROR! MR. MIRROR! ♪
FFAAAA

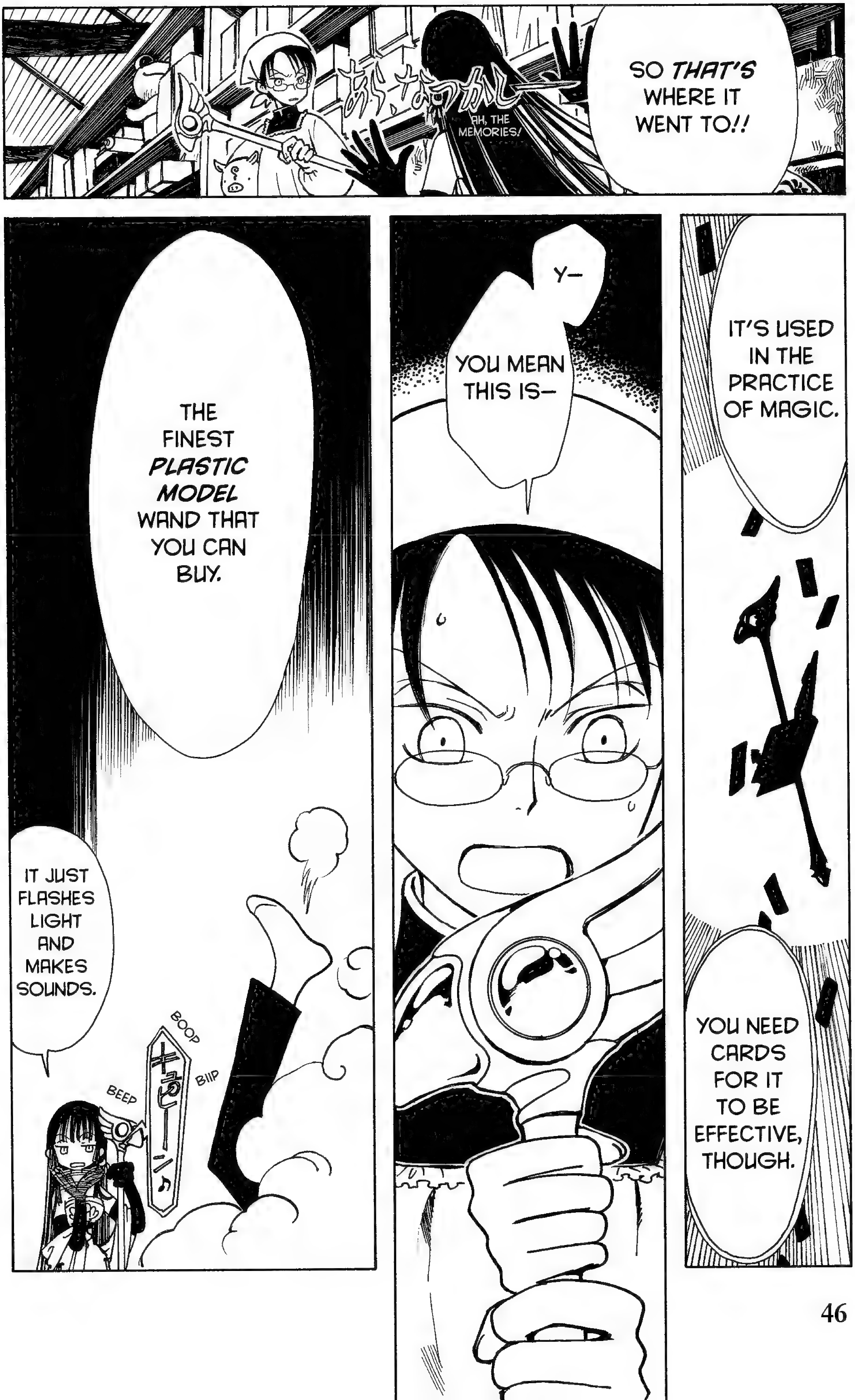
LET'S BRING EVERYONE TOGETHER! ♪
QUIETLY BRING EVERYONE TOGETHER! ♪
HUH?
TSK!
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HE WOULDN'T GET THESE LYRICS.
THAT'S THE GENERATION GAP FOR YOU.
?
ZHOOOO
AHH.
THE ROOTS OF THIS RUN DEEP.
YOU'VE SUFFERED MUCH PAIN.

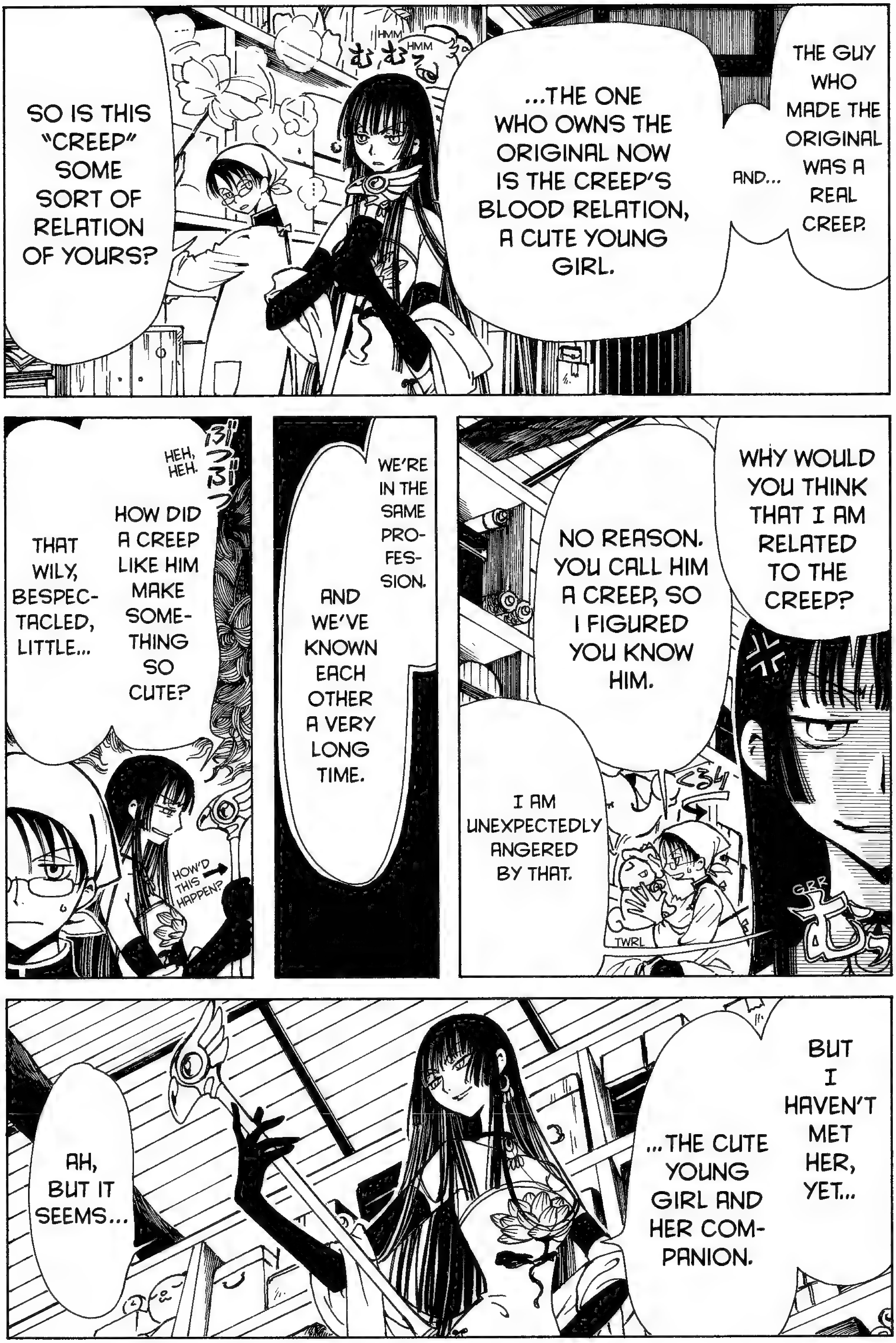

GET TO WORK!
EH?!
YOU'RE WORKING FOR US, NOW.
AND WHEN YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH WORK TO PAY...
...THAT'S WHEN I'LL GRANT...
...YOUR WISH.
WE'VE GOT A WORKER!♡
WE'VE GOT A WORKER!♡
TWRL
TWRL
YES...
NOW THE CLEANING AND HEAVY LIFTING WILL BE SO MUCH EASIER!
YOU PLANNED THIS ALL ALONG!!

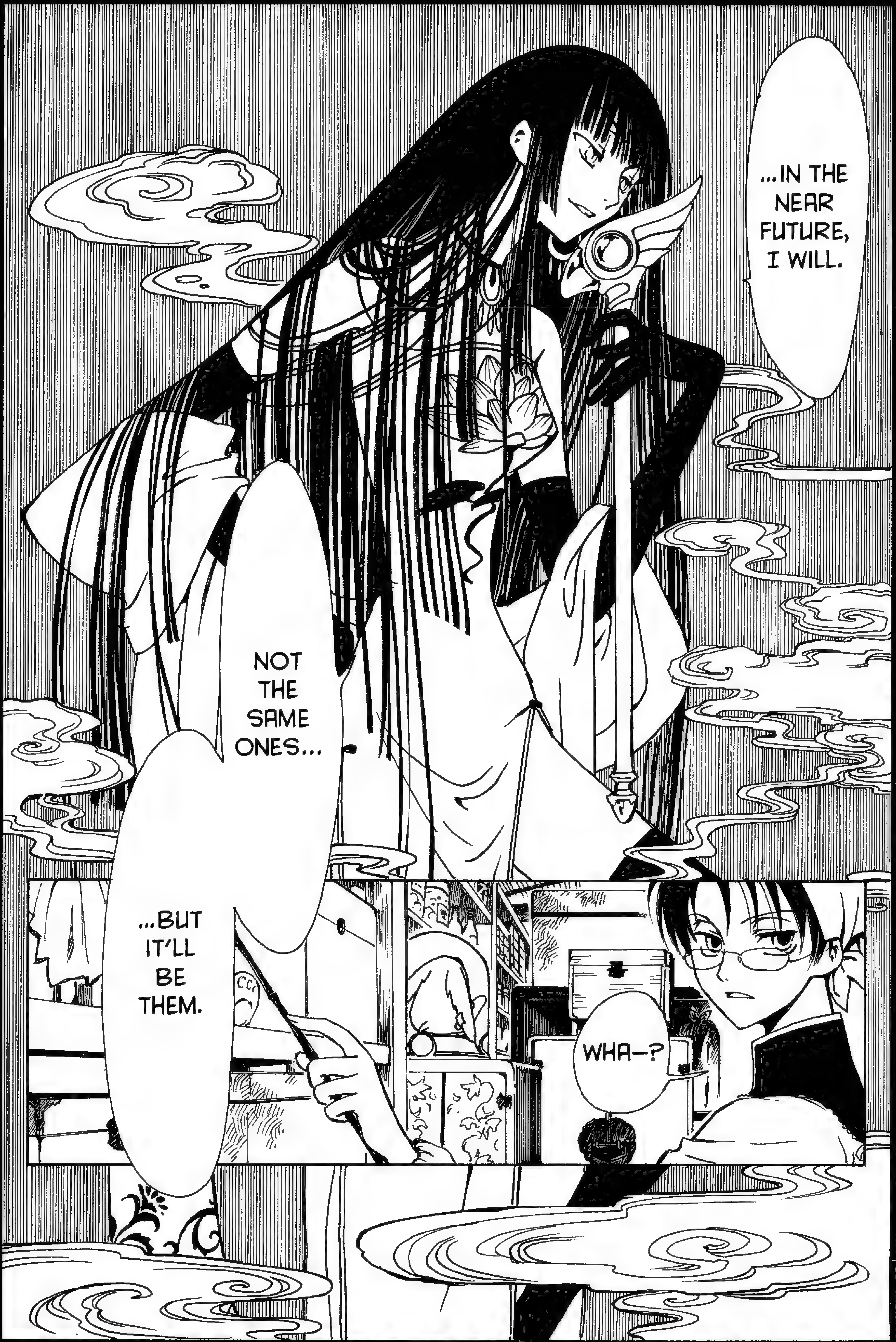
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜


DAMMIT!
パタ
FWAP
パタ
FWAP
WHY AM I THE ONE REDUCED TO DOING ALL THIS?!
LOOK AT THIS! WHAT LIVING CREATURE CAN LIVE IN ALL THIS DUST?!
あー
OH, MAN!
YOU LEAVE THIS LYING AROUND, IT'LL CATCH AND RIP YOUR CLOTHES!
CLEAN CLEAN
いそいそ
BUSY BUSY
ぱた
KLATTA
ぱた
KLATTA
ぱた
KLATTA
ぱた
KLATTA
ぱた
KLATTA
ぱた
KLATTA
HE COMPLAINS A LOT, BUT HE GOES AT IT LIKE A TROOPER.
HE'S A CLEANING PRO.
HE'S A CLEANING PRO! ♡
HE'S A CLEANING PRO! ♡

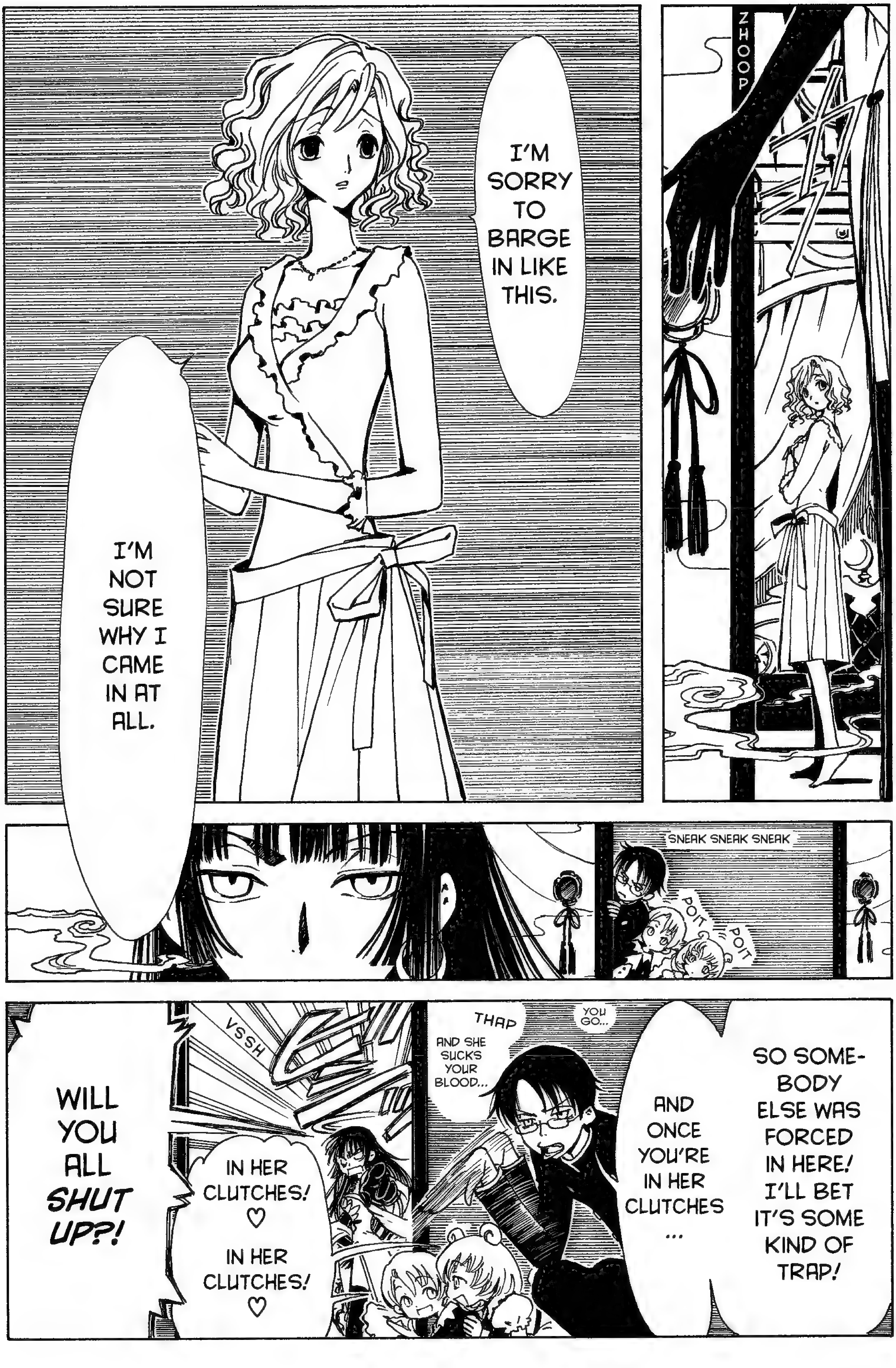

THIS PLACE IS IMPOSSIBLE! LOOK AT ALL THIS JUNK LYING AROUND!
WHAT *IS* THIS THING ANYWAY?
なんじゃこりゃあ
NOT JUNK! TREASURES!
VSSH
HAVE THESE YOUNG MEN NO EYES TO SEE?
WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A *MOUNTAIN OF TREASURE!!*
RIGHT?
RIGHT! ♡
KEEP OUT
コレ
THIS
WHERE DO YOU GET OFF CALLING *THIS* A TREASURE?!
WHAT THE HELL IS IT?!
どーん
DOOOOM

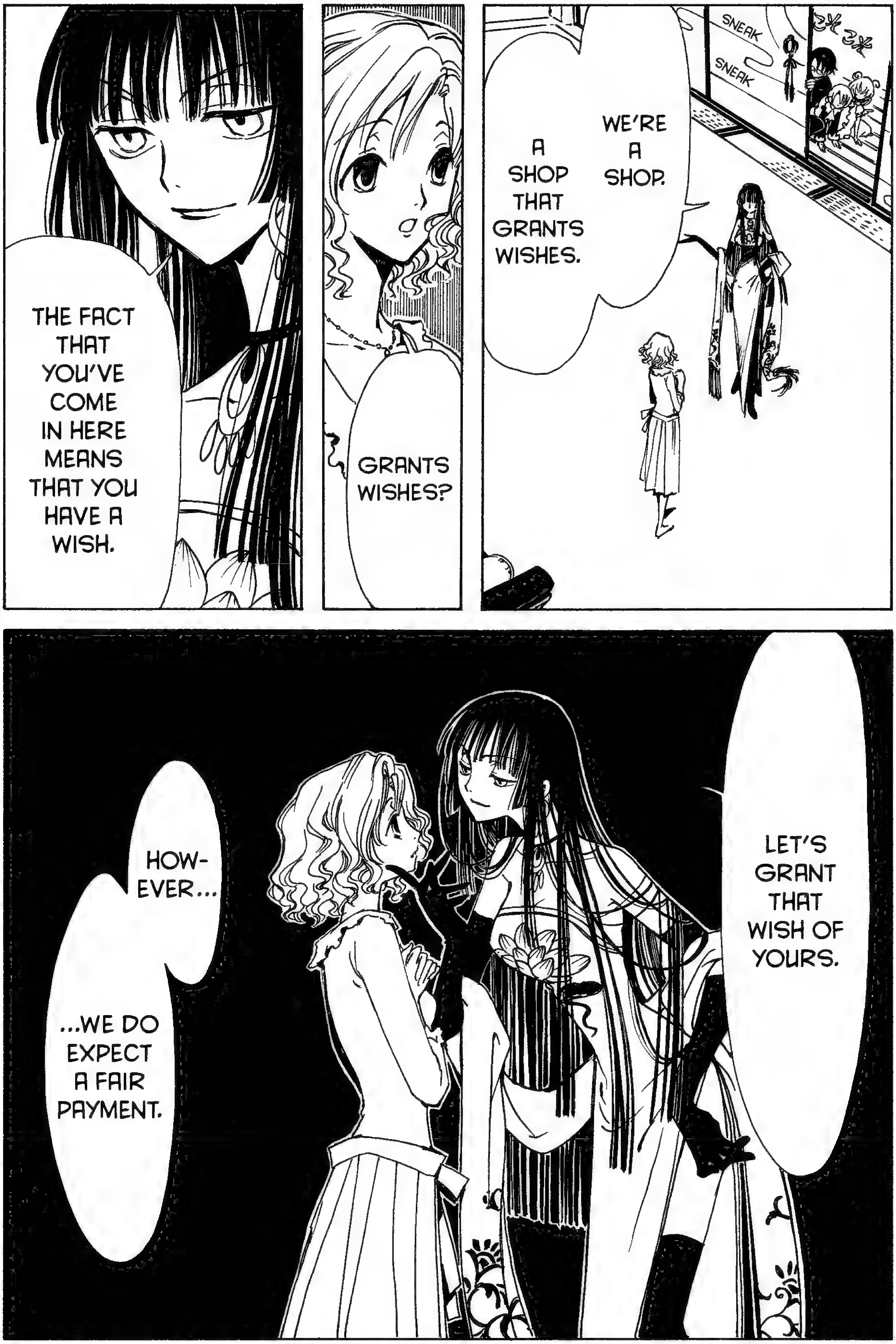

SO *THAT'S* WHERE IT WENT TO!!
あらなつかしー
AH, THE MEMORIES!
IT'S USED IN THE PRACTICE OF MAGIC.
YOU NEED CARDS FOR IT TO BE EFFECTIVE, THOUGH.
Y—
YOU MEAN THIS IS—
THE FINEST ***PLASTIC MODEL*** WAND THAT YOU CAN BUY.
IT JUST FLASHES LIGHT AND MAKES SOUNDS.
キュピーン♪
BOOP
BIIP
BEEP

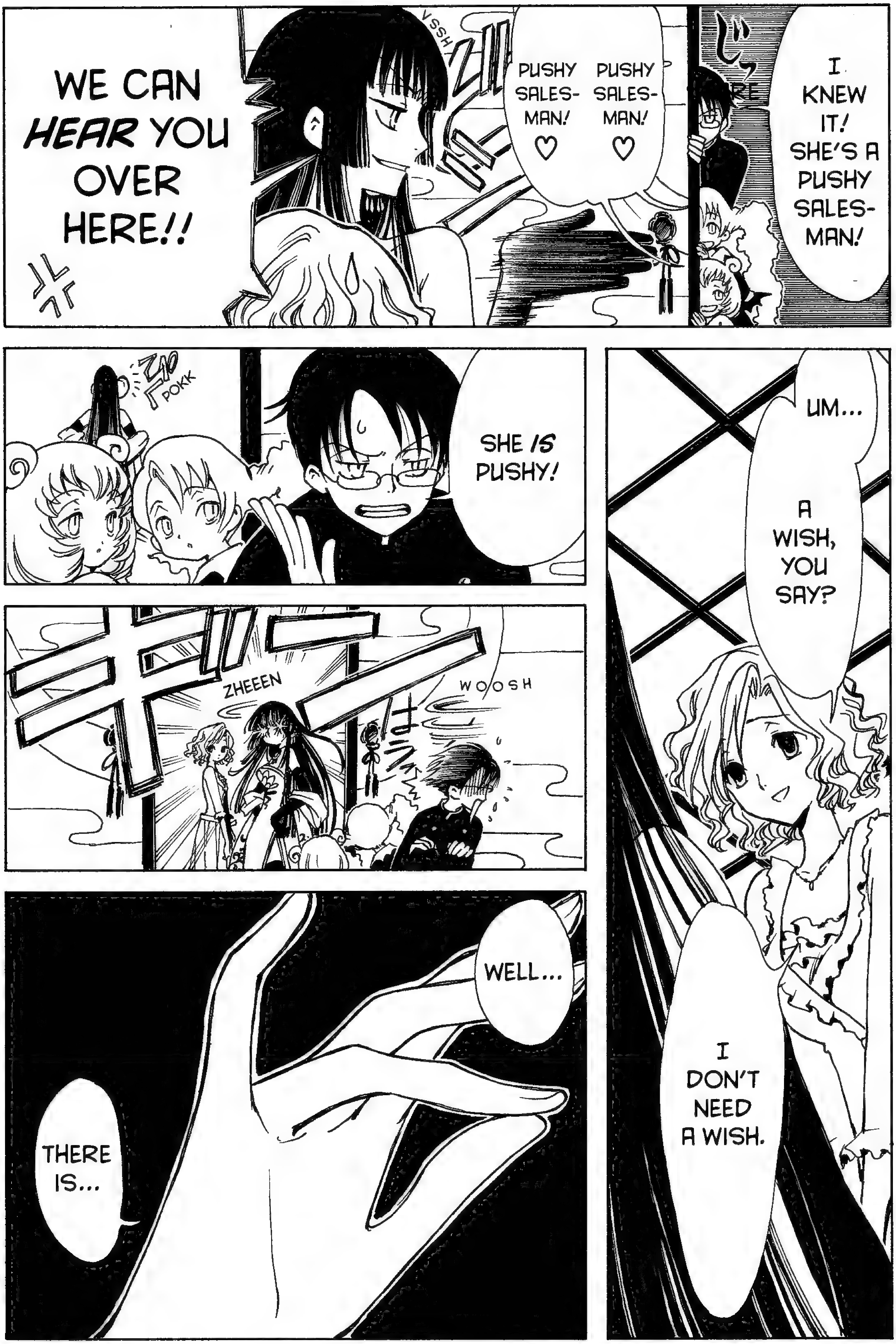

THE GUY WHO MADE THE ORIGINAL WAS A REAL CREEP.
AND...
...THE ONE WHO OWNS THE ORIGINAL NOW IS THE CREEP'S BLOOD RELATION, A CUTE YOUNG GIRL.
むむ HMM HMM
SO IS THIS "CREEP" SOME SORT OF RELATION OF YOURS?
WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT I AM RELATED TO THE CREEP?
NO REASON. YOU CALL HIM A CREEP, SO I FIGURED YOU KNOW HIM.
I AM UNEXPECTEDLY ANGERED BY THAT.
くるん TWRL
むっ GRR
WE'RE IN THE SAME PROFESSION.
AND WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER A VERY LONG TIME.
ぶつぶつ HEH, HEH.
HOW DID A CREEP LIKE HIM MAKE SOMETHING SO CUTE?
THAT WILY, BESPECTACLED, LITTLE...
HOW'D THIS HAPPEN?
BUT I HAVEN'T MET HER, YET...
...THE CUTE YOUNG GIRL AND HER COMPANION.
AH, BUT IT SEEMS...

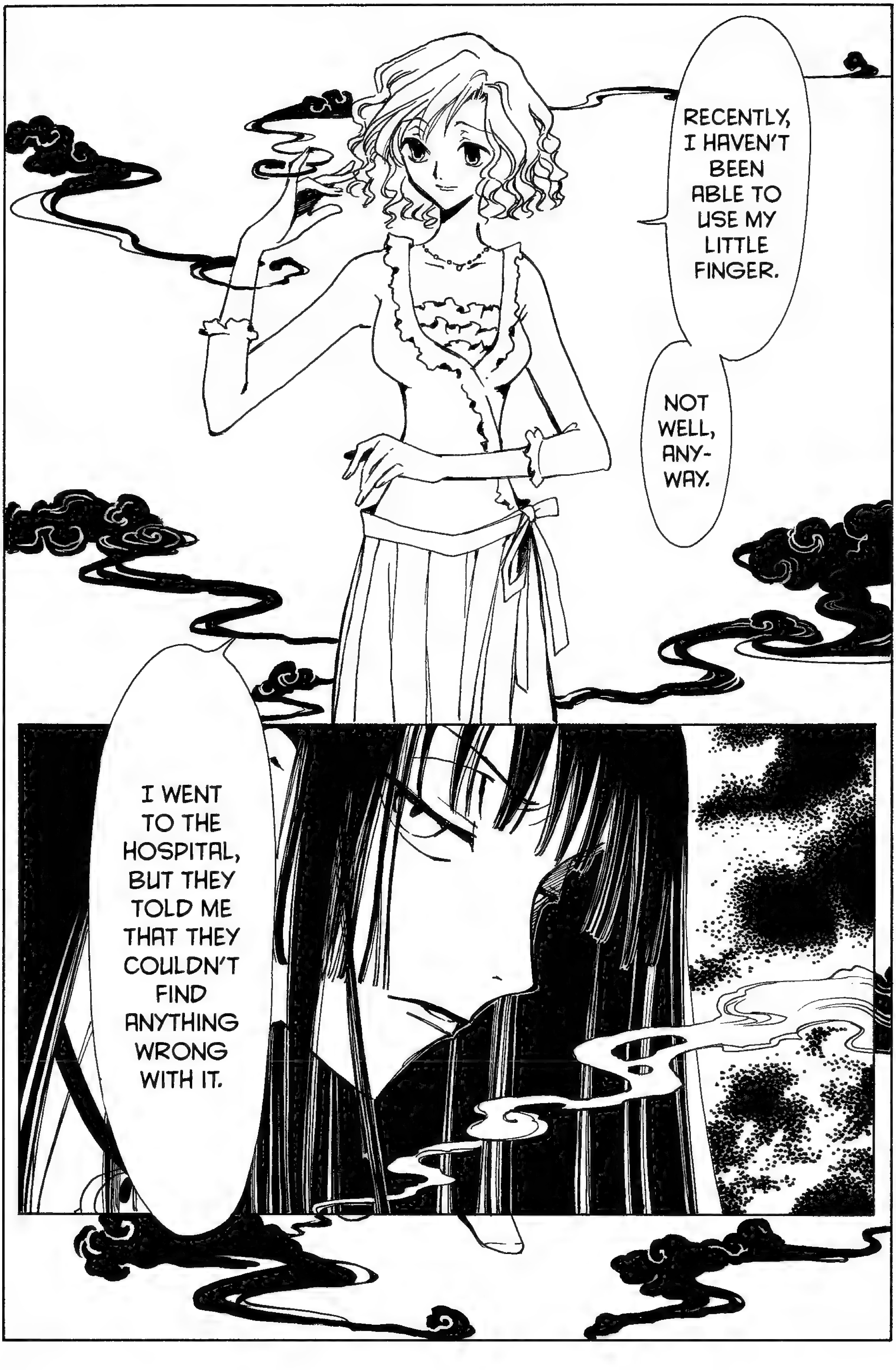

...IN THE NEAR FUTURE, I WILL.
NOT THE SAME ONES...
...BUT IT'LL BE THEM.
WHA-?

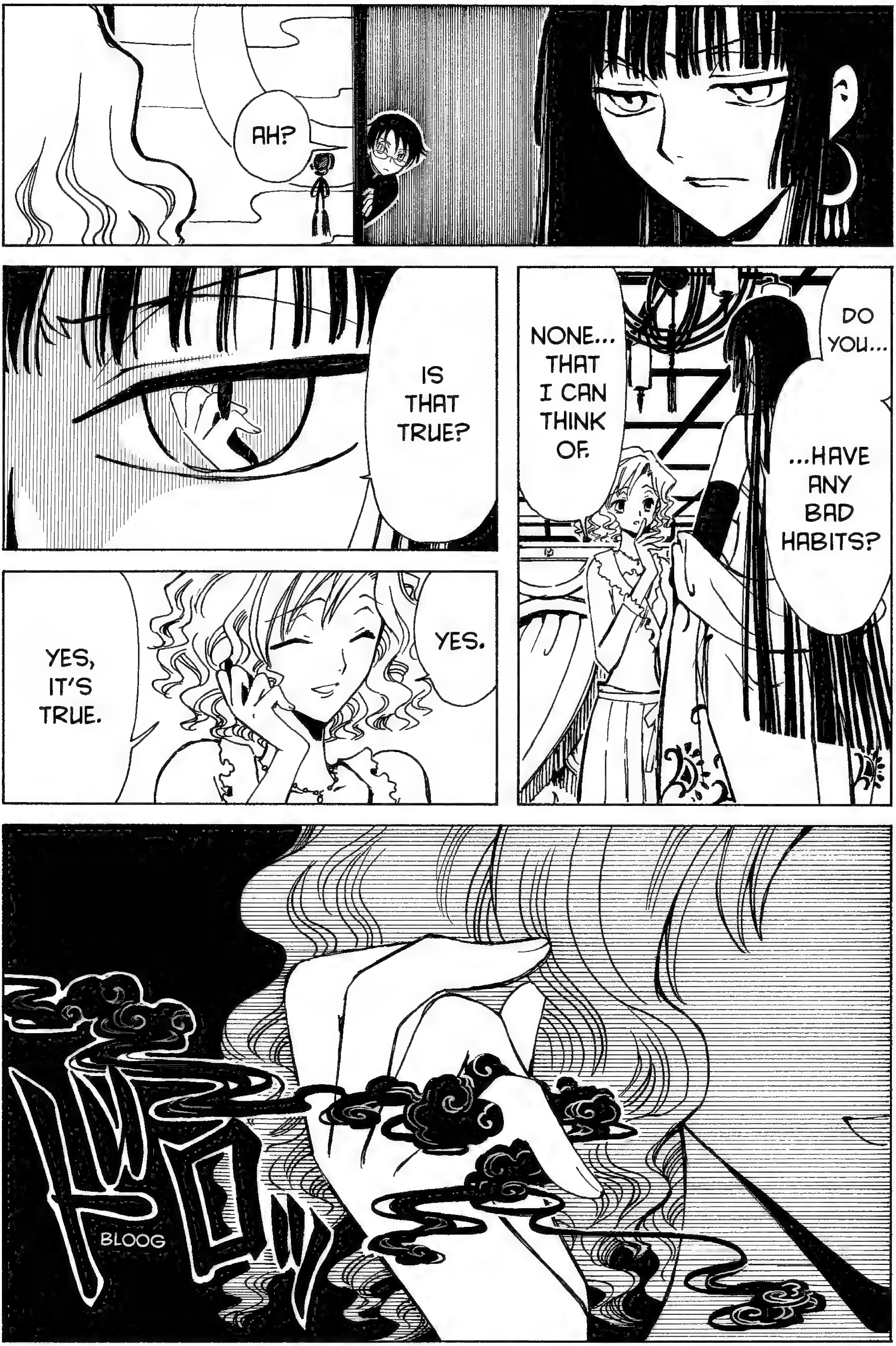
KREEE
JKKK
.....A CUSTOMER.
GLOM

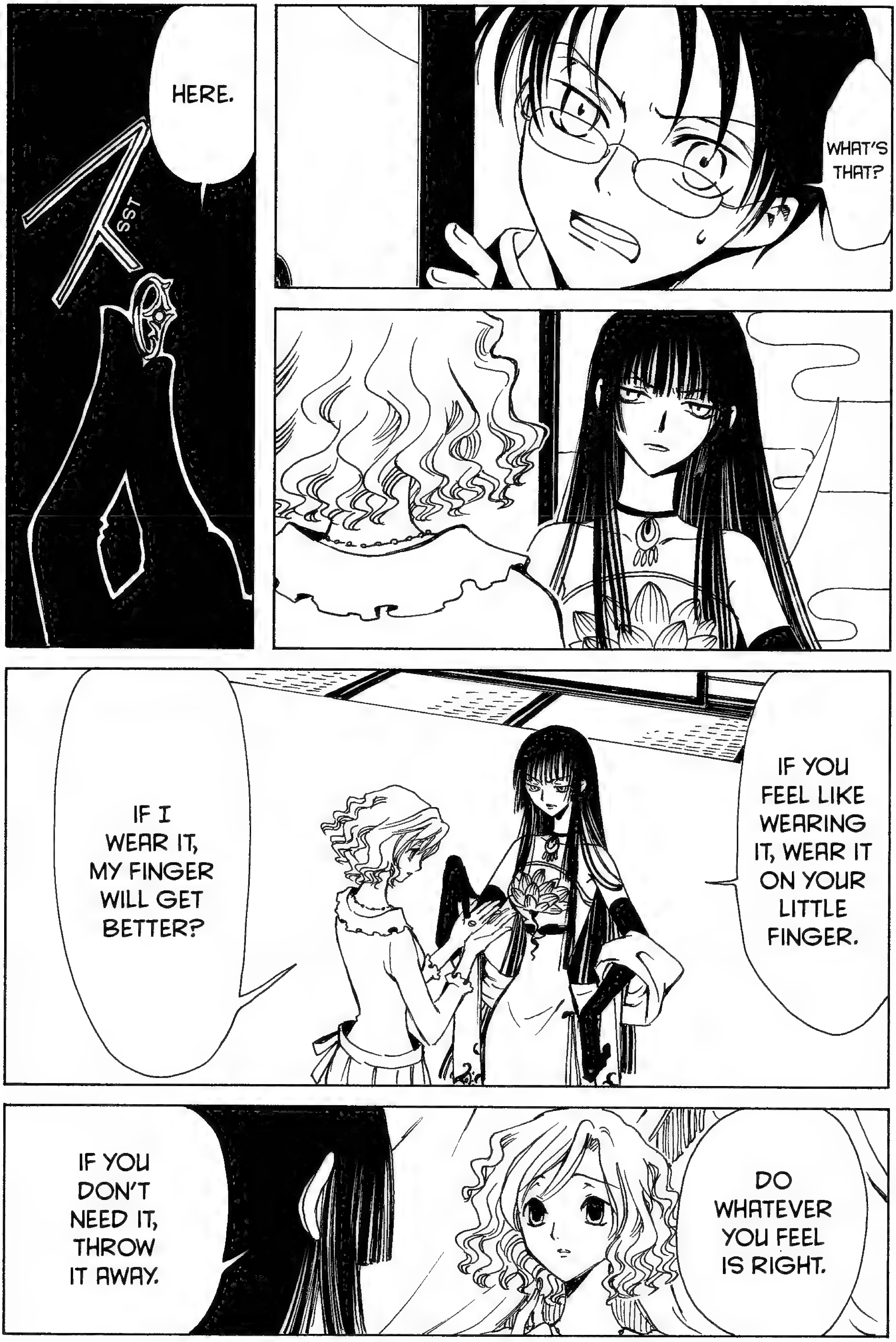

ZHOOP
I'M SORRY TO BARGE IN LIKE THIS.
I'M NOT SURE WHY I CAME IN AT ALL.
SNEAK SNEAK SNEAK
POIT
POIT
SO SOMEBODY ELSE WAS FORCED IN HERE! I'LL BET IT'S SOME KIND OF TRAP!
AND ONCE YOU'RE IN HER CLUTCHES...
YOU GO...
AND SHE SUCKS YOUR BLOOD...
THAP
IN HER CLUTCHES! ♡
IN HER CLUTCHES! ♡
VSSH
WILL YOU ALL *SHUT UP?!*

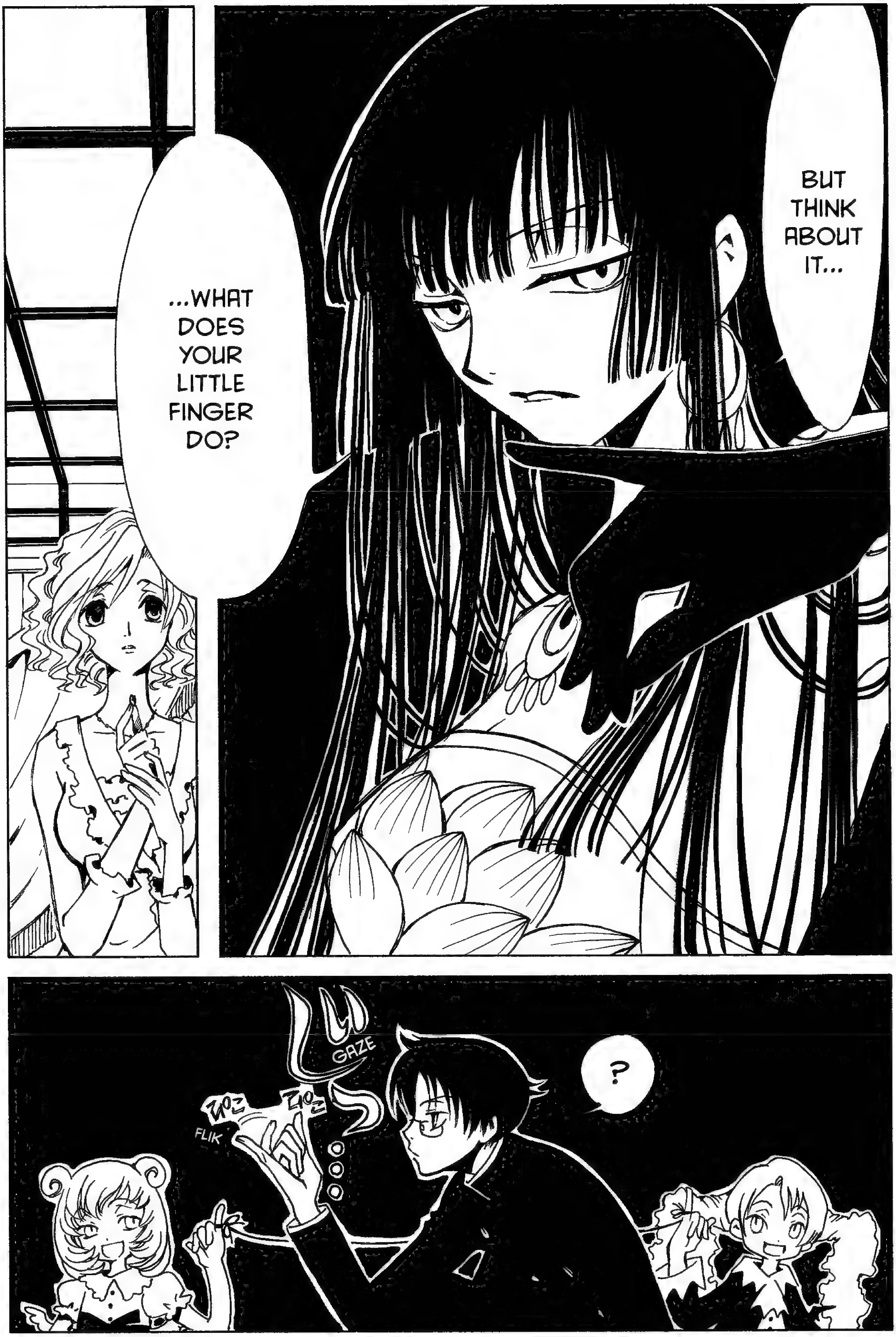

SNEAK
SNEAK
WE'RE A SHOP.
A SHOP THAT GRANTS WISHES.
GRANTS WISHES?
THE FACT THAT YOU'VE COME IN HERE MEANS THAT YOU HAVE A WISH.
LET'S GRANT THAT WISH OF YOURS.
HOWEVER...
...WE DO EXPECT A FAIR PAYMENT.


I KNEW IT! SHE'S A PUSHY SALESMAN!
じっ
STARE
PUSHY SALESMAN! ♡
PUSHY SALESMAN! ♡
VSSH
ZIP
WE CAN *HEAR* YOU OVER HERE!!
SHE *IS* PUSHY!
ZIP
POKK
WOOSH
ZHEEEN
UM...
A WISH, YOU SAY?
I DON'T NEED A WISH.
WELL...
THERE IS...

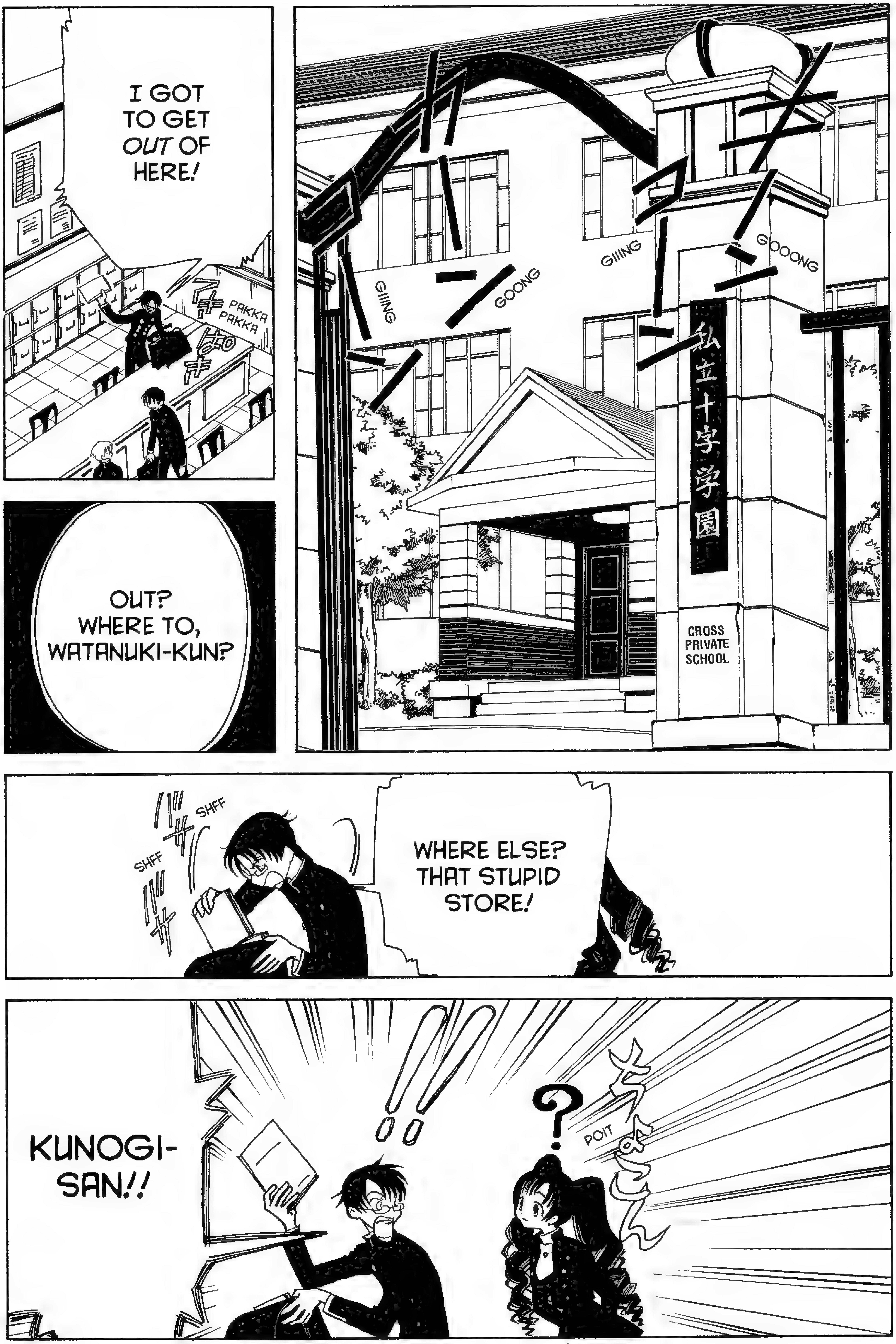

RECENTLY, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO USE MY LITTLE FINGER.
NOT WELL, ANY-WAY.
I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL, BUT THEY TOLD ME THAT THEY COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT.


AH?
DO YOU...
...HAVE ANY BAD HABITS?
NONE... THAT I CAN THINK OF.
IS THAT TRUE?
YES.
YES, IT'S TRUE.
BLOOG

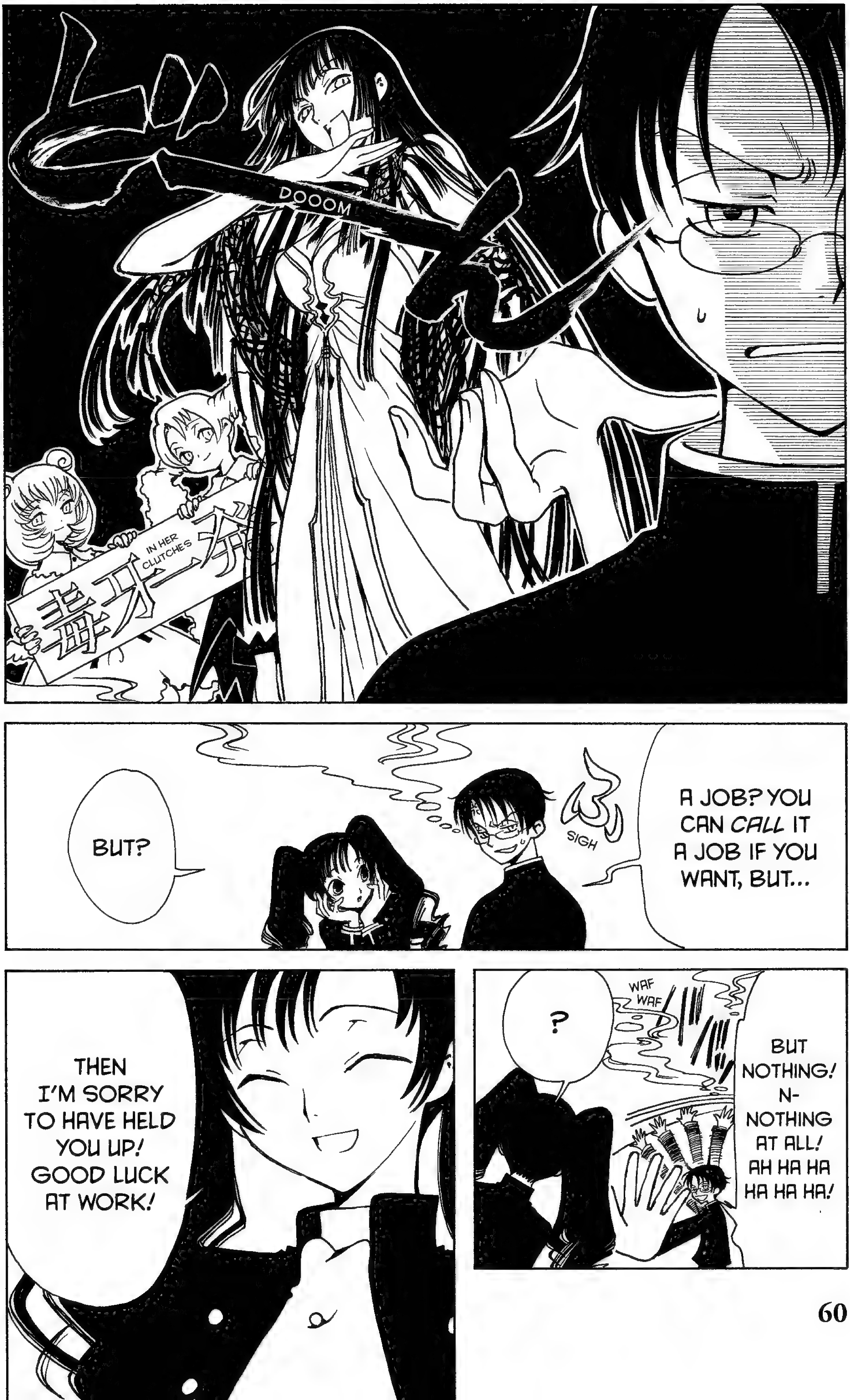

WHAT'S THAT?
HERE.
SST
IF YOU FEEL LIKE WEARING IT, WEAR IT ON YOUR LITTLE FINGER.
IF I WEAR IT, MY FINGER WILL GET BETTER?
DO WHATEVER YOU FEEL IS RIGHT.
IF YOU DON'T NEED IT, THROW IT AWAY.

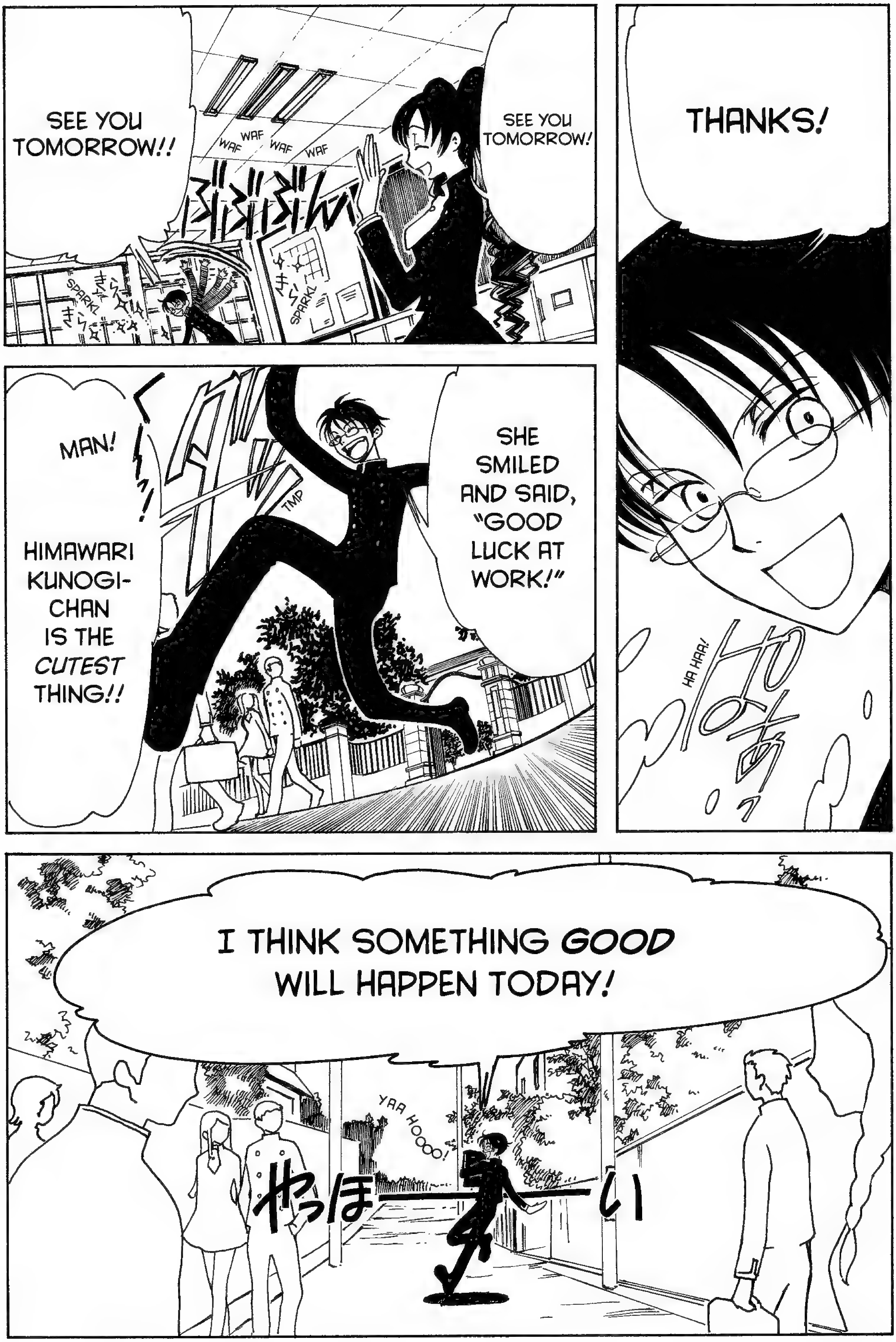

BUT THINK ABOUT IT...
...WHAT DOES YOUR LITTLE FINGER DO?
?
GAZE
FLIK

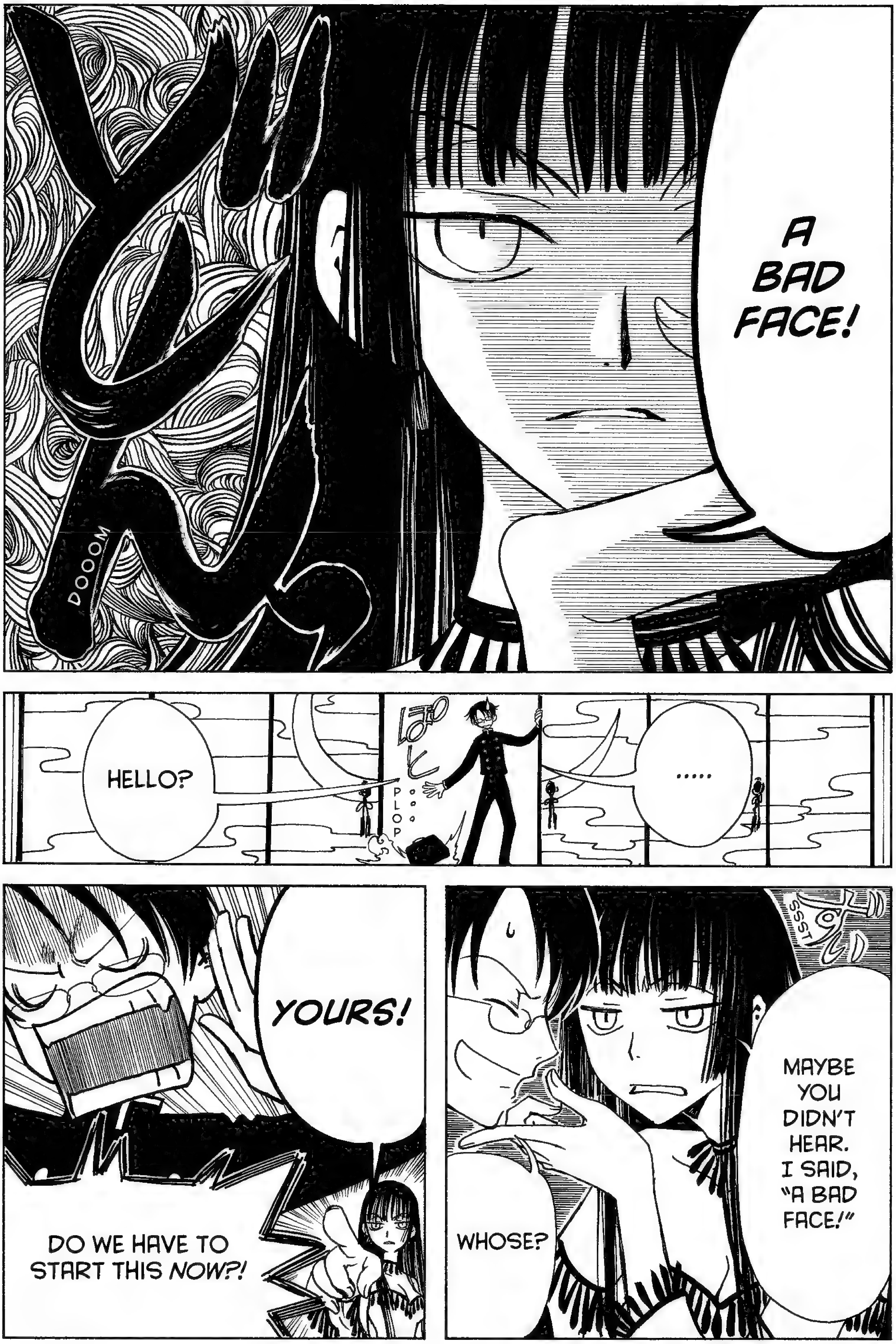
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

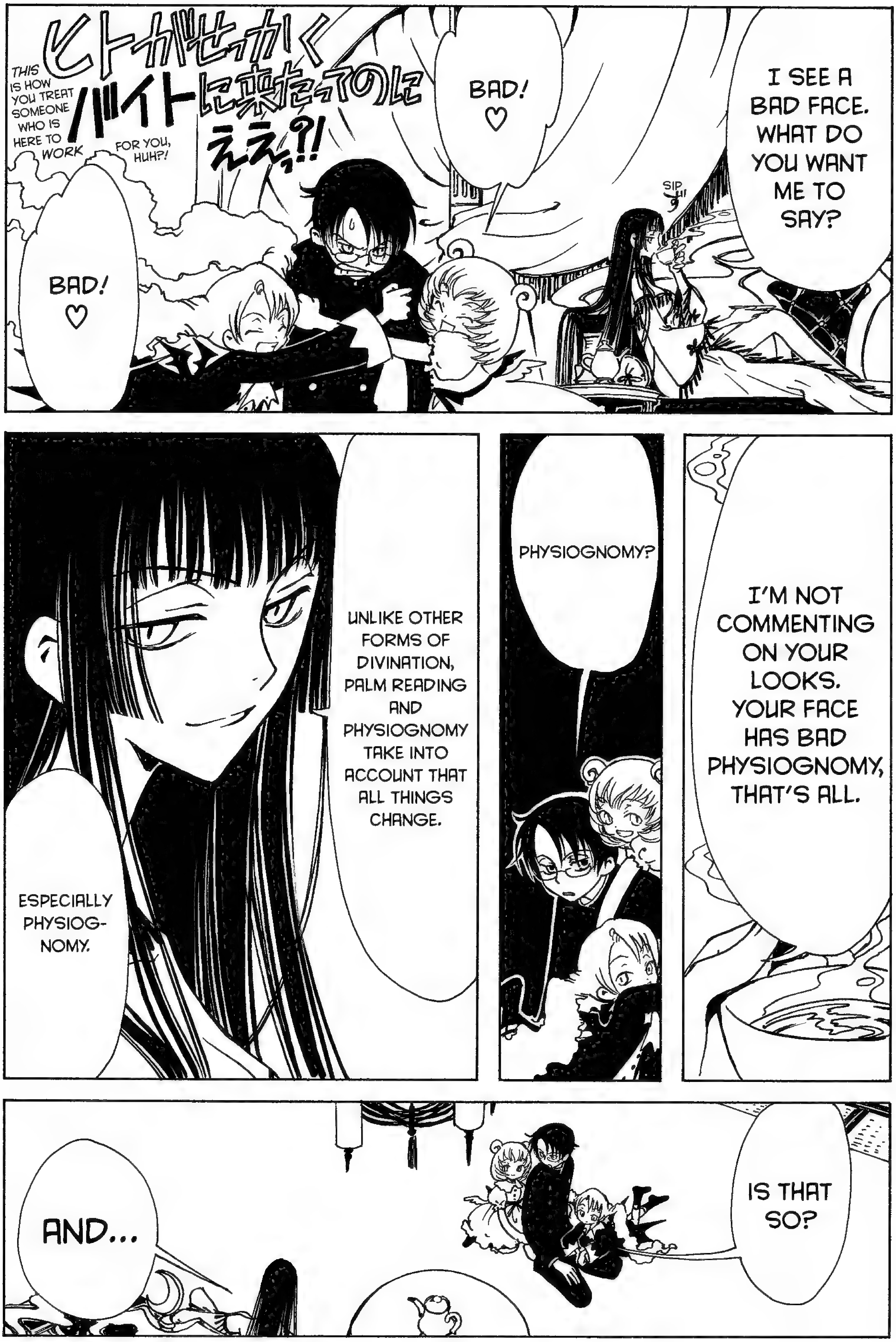

GIIING
GOONG
GIIING
GOOONG
私立十字学園
CROSS PRIVATE SCHOOL
I GOT TO GET *OUT* OF HERE!
PAKKA PAKKA
OUT? WHERE TO, WATANUKI-KUN?
SHFF
SHFF
WHERE ELSE? THAT STUPID STORE!
!!
?
POIT
KUNOGI-SAN!!

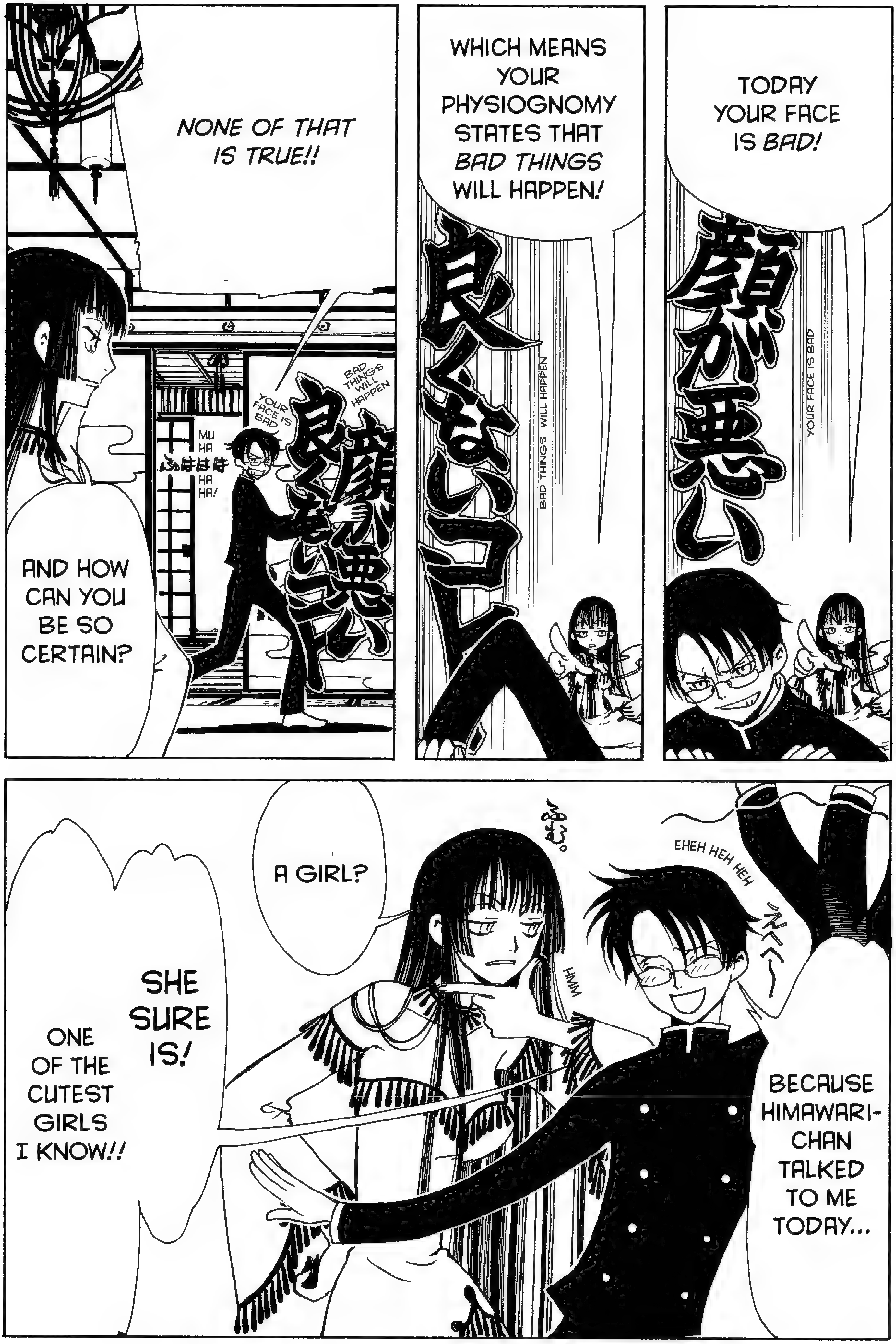
I KNOW YOU'RE A BUSY GUY, BUT WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO?
YOU DON'T LIVE ON CAMPUS, DO YOU, WATANUKI-KUN?
AH! NO.
THEN... ...TO A JOB?
MY FIRST NAME IS HIMAWARI!
CALL ME BY THAT...
...PLEASE?

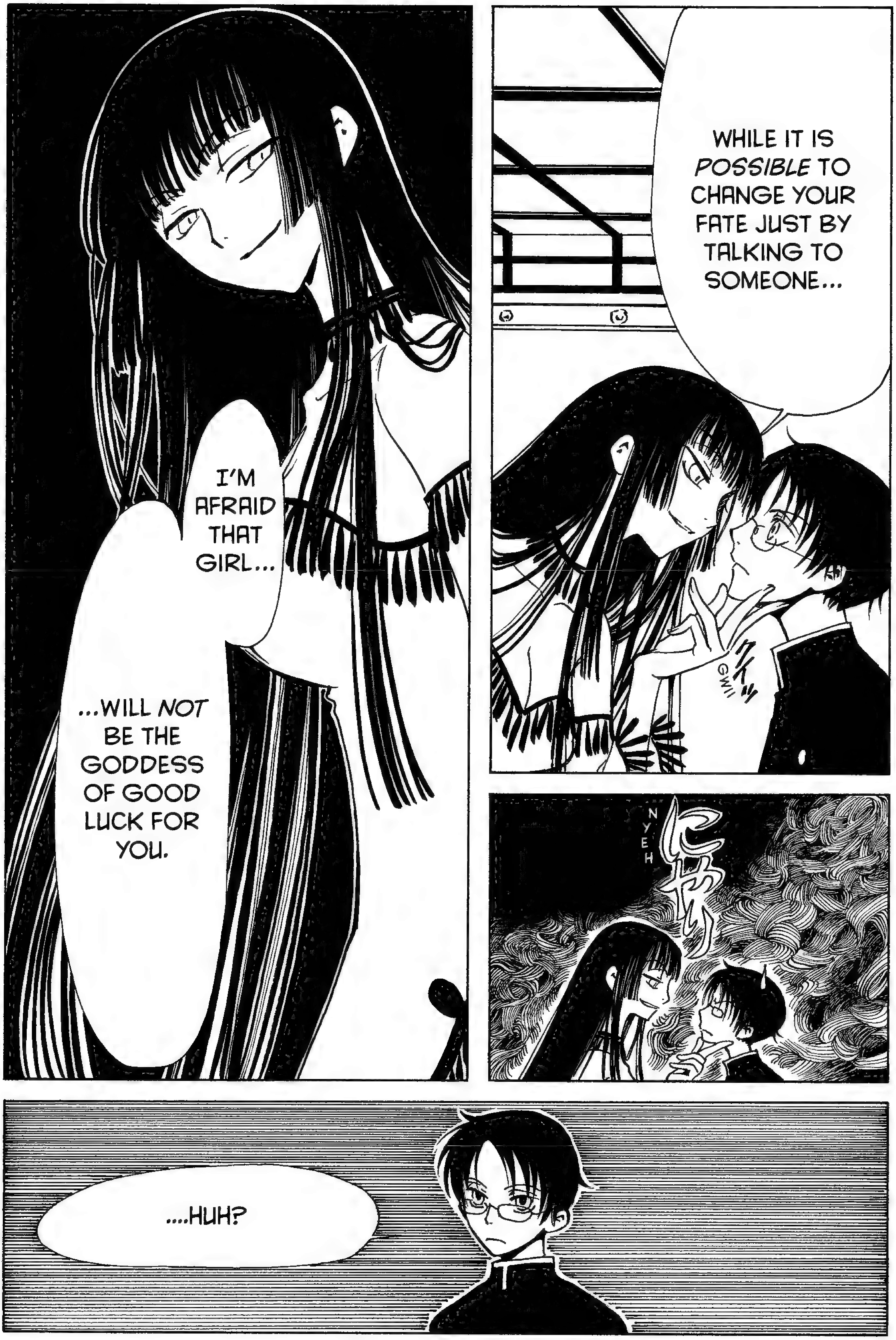

DOOOM
IN HER CLUTCHES
毒牙一発
A JOB? YOU CAN *CALL* IT A JOB IF YOU WANT, BUT...
ふ
SIGH
BUT?
BUT NOTHING! N-NOTHING AT ALL! AH HA HA HA HA!
WAF WAF
?
THEN I'M SORRY TO HAVE HELD YOU UP! GOOD LUCK AT WORK!


THANKS!
HA HAA!
SEE YOU TOMORROW!
SEE YOU TOMORROW!!
WAF WAF WAF WAF
SPARKL
SPARKL
SHE SMILED AND SAID, "GOOD LUCK AT WORK!"
TMP
MAN!
HIMAWARI KUNOGI-CHAN IS THE *CUTEST* THING!!
I THINK SOMETHING *GOOD* WILL HAPPEN TODAY!
YAA HOOOO!
やっほーい

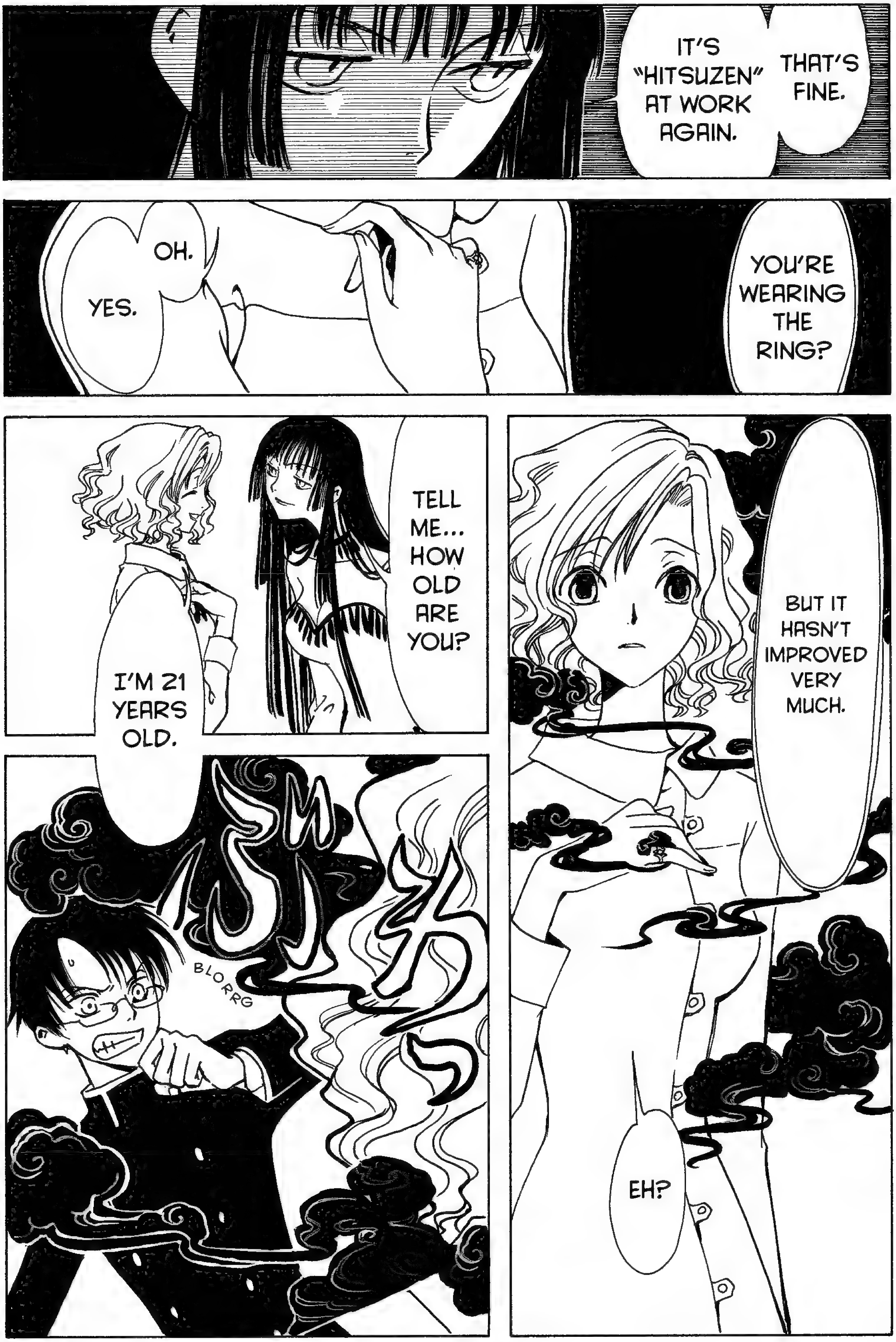

A BAD FACE!
DOOOM
.....
PLOP
HELLO?
SSST
MAYBE YOU DIDN'T HEAR. I SAID, "A BAD FACE!"
WHOSE?
YOURS!
DO WE HAVE TO START THIS *NOW*?!

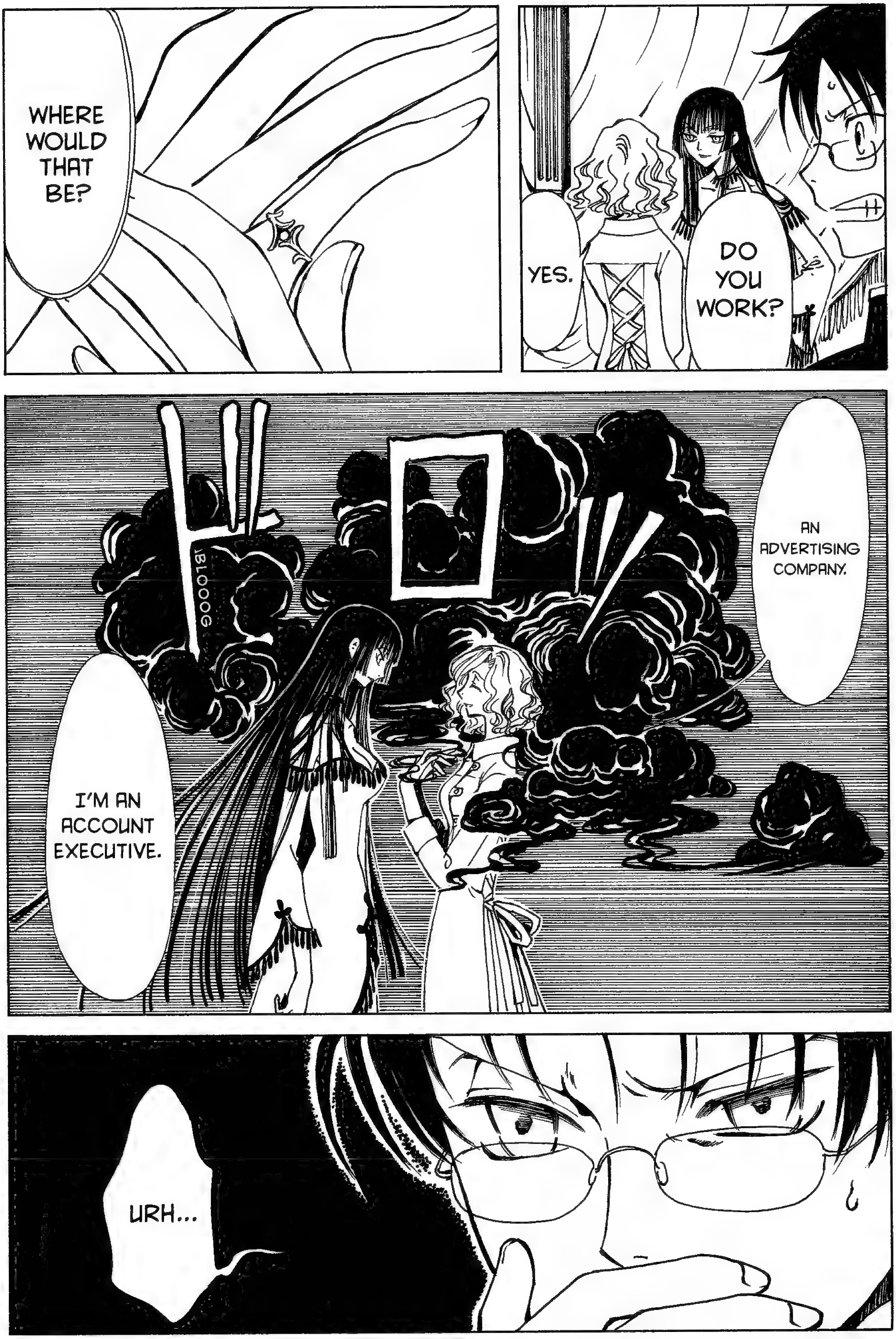

I SEE A BAD FACE. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?
SIP
BAD! ♡
ヒトがせっかくバイトに来たってのに ええっ?!
THIS IS HOW YOU TREAT SOMEONE WHO IS HERE TO WORK FOR YOU, HUH?!
BAD! ♡
I'M NOT COMMENTING ON YOUR LOOKS. YOUR FACE HAS BAD PHYSIOGNOMY, THAT'S ALL.
PHYSIOGNOMY?
UNLIKE OTHER FORMS OF DIVINATION, PALM READING AND PHYSIOGNOMY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT ALL THINGS CHANGE.
ESPECIALLY PHYSIOGNOMY.
IS THAT SO?
AND...


TODAY YOUR FACE IS *BAD!*
顔が悪い
YOUR FACE IS BAD
WHICH MEANS YOUR PHYSIOGNOMY STATES THAT *BAD THINGS* WILL HAPPEN!
良くないコト
BAD THINGS WILL HAPPEN
NONE OF THAT IS TRUE!!
顔が悪い
YOUR FACE IS BAD
良くないコト
BAD THINGS WILL HAPPEN
ふははは
MU HA HA HA!
AND HOW CAN YOU BE SO CERTAIN?
えへへ～
EHEH HEH HEH
BECAUSE HIMAWARI-CHAN TALKED TO ME TODAY...
ふむ。
HMM
A GIRL?
SHE SURE IS!
ONE OF THE CUTEST GIRLS I KNOW!!

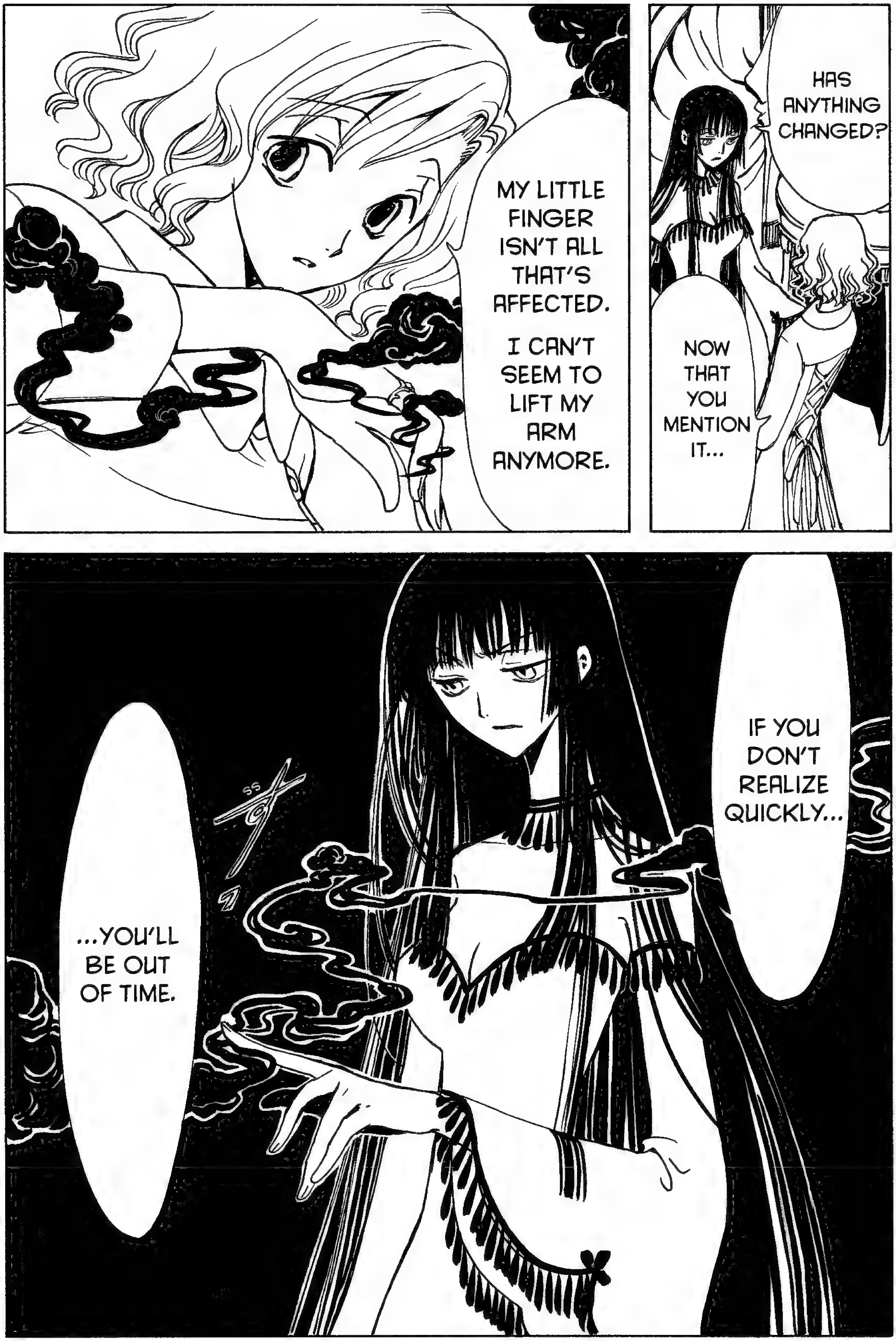

WHILE IT IS *POSSIBLE* TO CHANGE YOUR FATE JUST BY TALKING TO SOMEONE...
GWI
にやり
NYEH
I'M AFRAID THAT GIRL...
...WILL *NOT* BE THE GODDESS OF GOOD LUCK FOR YOU.
....HUH?

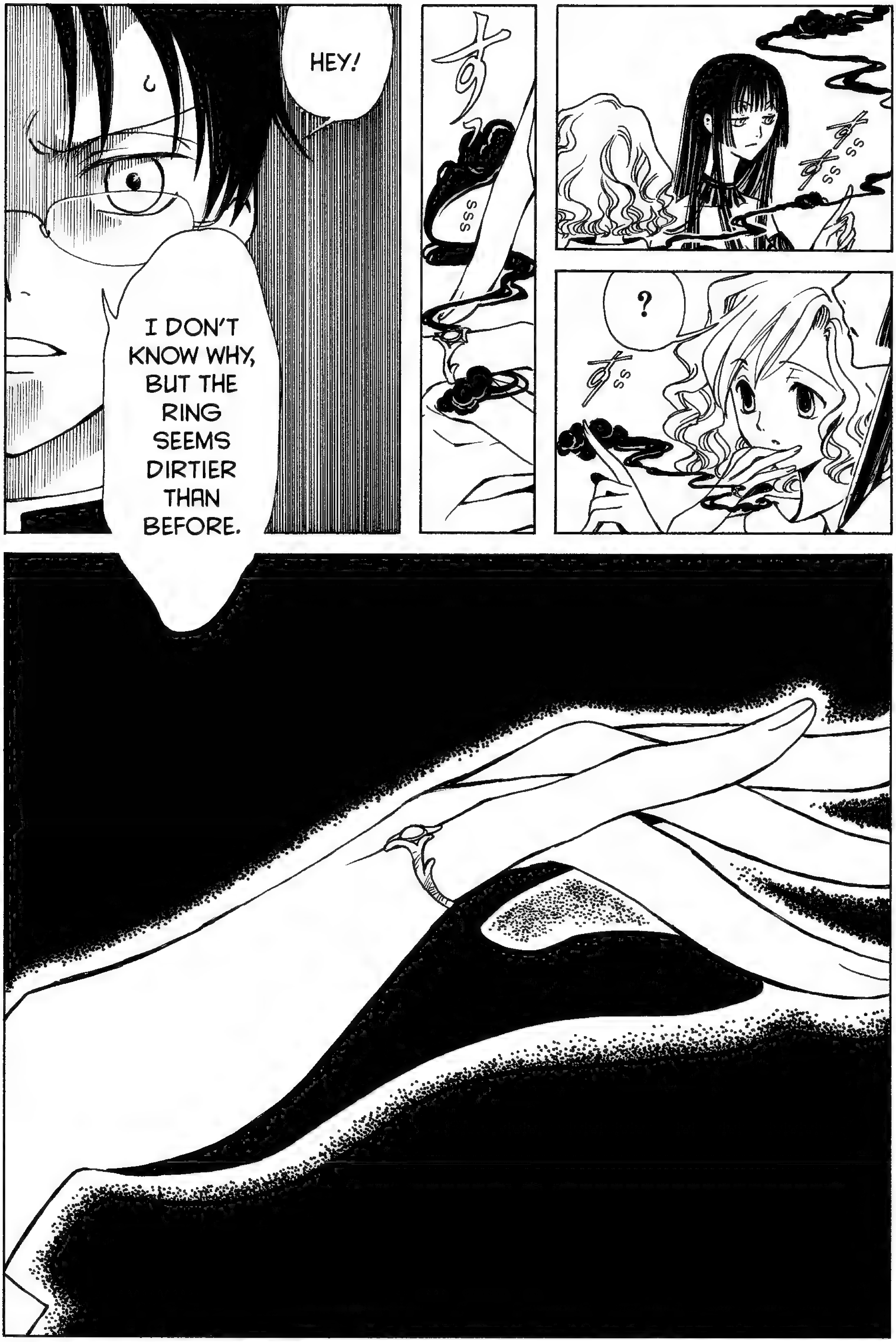
BLOOG
IT'S THAT—
SST
YES, IT SEEMS SO.
UM...
BEFORE I REALIZED IT, I WAS HERE AGAIN.


THAT'S FINE.
IT'S "HITSUZEN" AT WORK AGAIN.
YOU'RE WEARING THE RING?
OH.
YES.
BUT IT HASN'T IMPROVED VERY MUCH.
EH?
TELL ME... HOW OLD ARE YOU?
I'M 21 YEARS OLD.
BLORRG

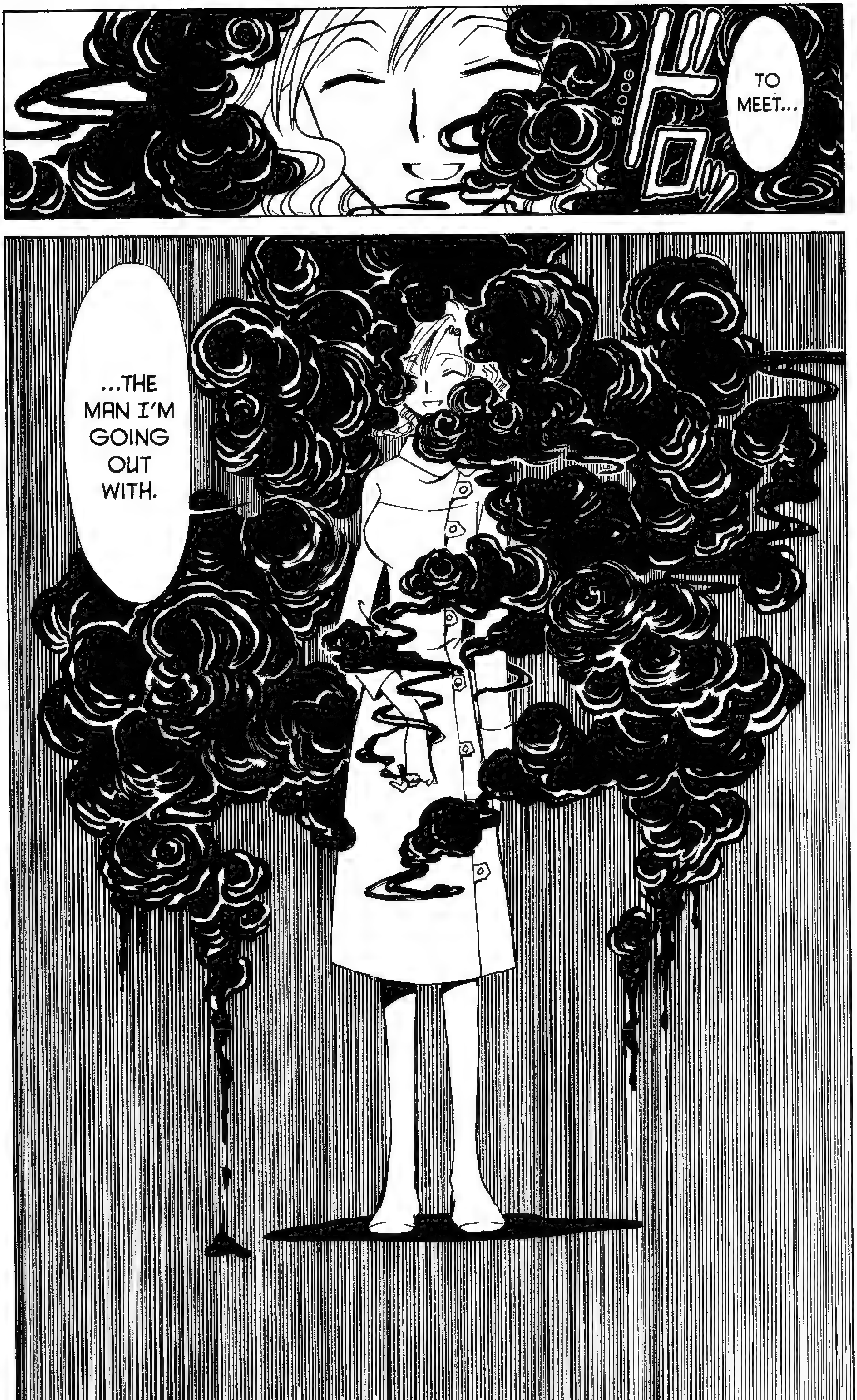

DO YOU WORK?
YES.
WHERE WOULD THAT BE?
AN ADVERTISING COMPANY.
BLOOOG
I'M AN ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE.
URH...

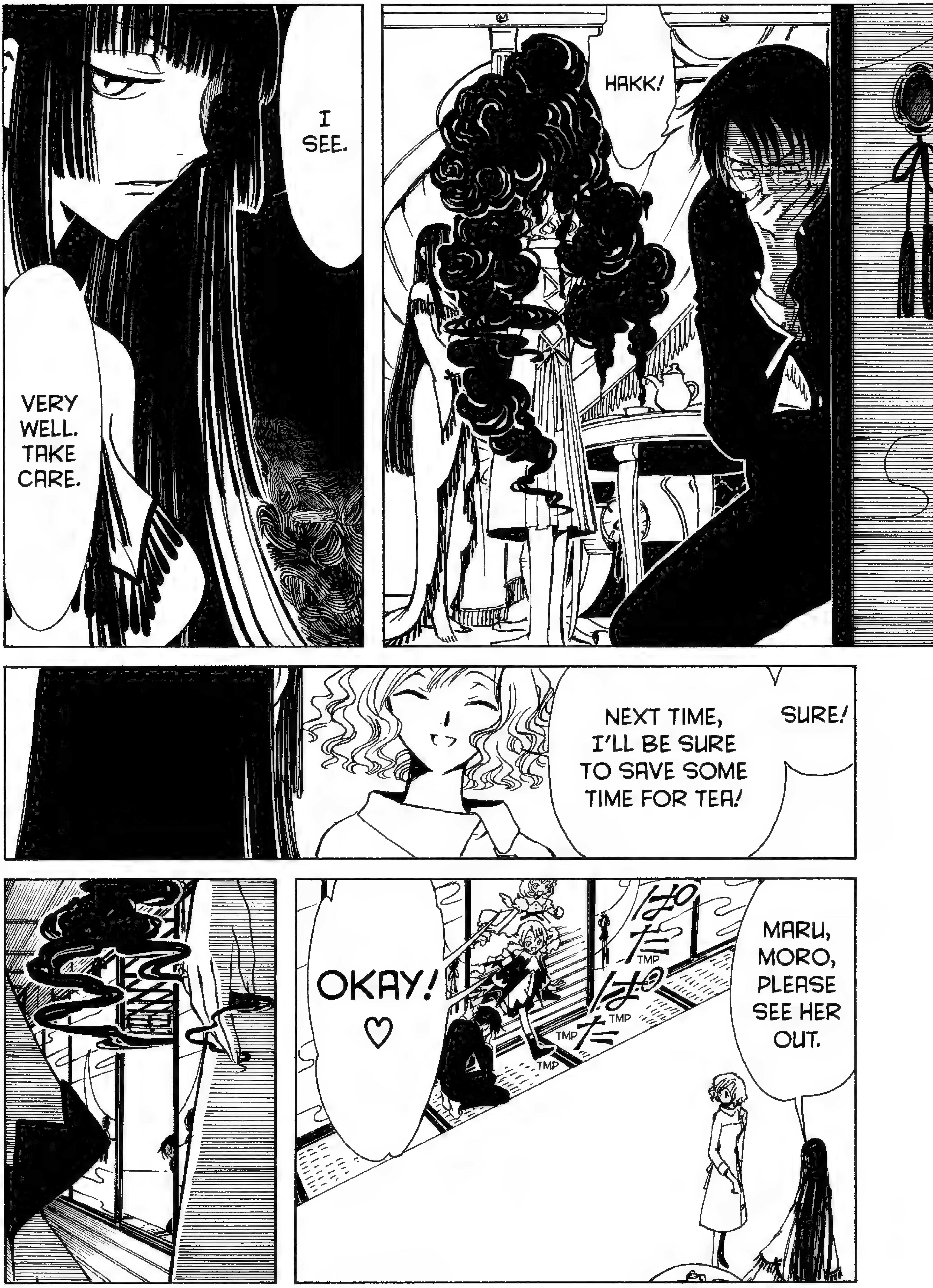
ARE YOU SURE...
...THAT YOU HAVE NO BAD HABITS?
DOES IT SEEM LIKE I'M DOING ANYTHING WRONG?
THERE'S A BAD HABIT HERE...
...AND...
...A BAD HABIT HERE.

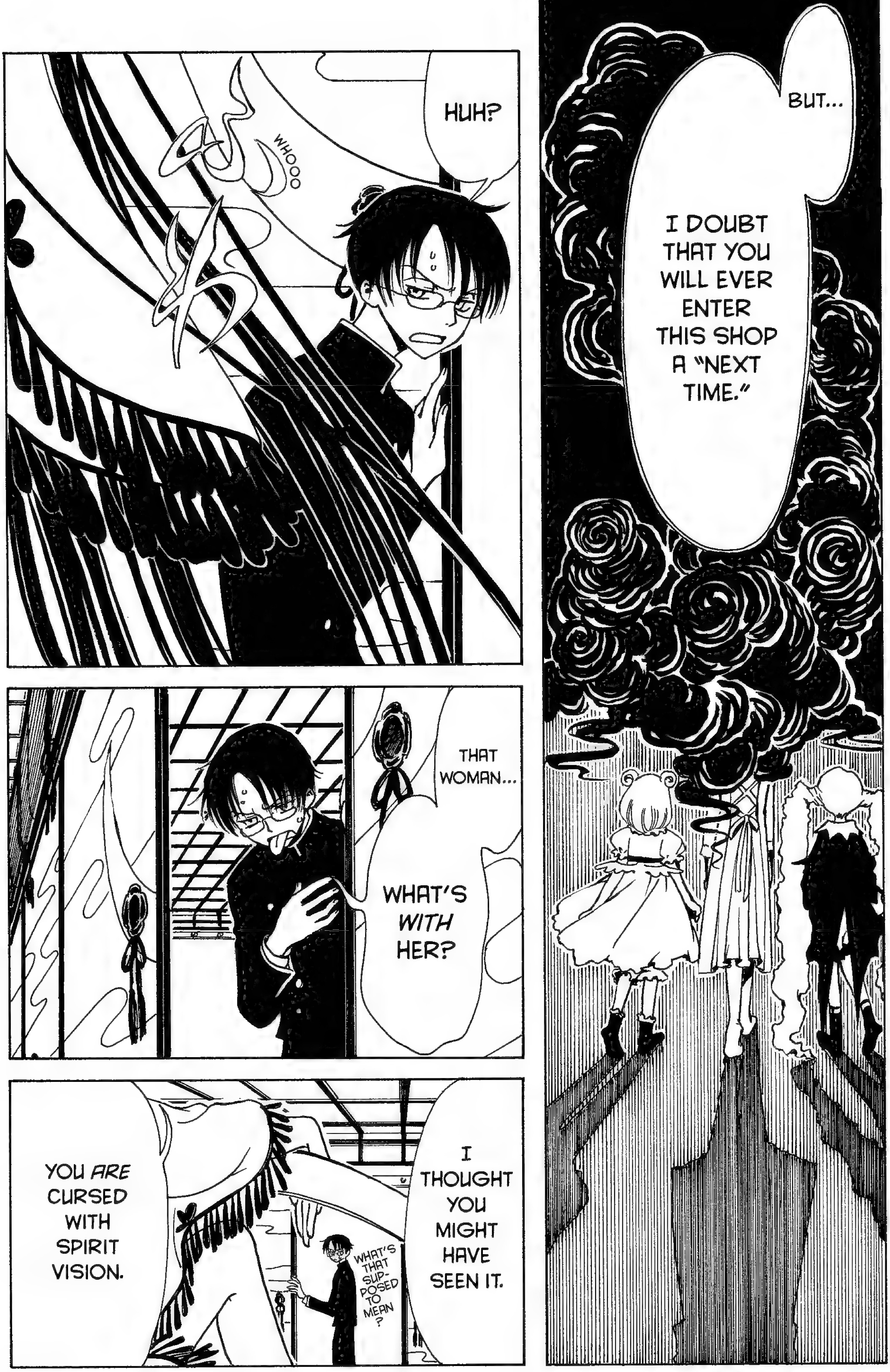

HAS ANYTHING CHANGED?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
MY LITTLE FINGER ISN'T ALL THAT'S AFFECTED.
I CAN'T SEEM TO LIFT MY ARM ANYMORE.
IF YOU DON'T REALIZE QUICKLY...
...YOU'LL BE OUT OF TIME.

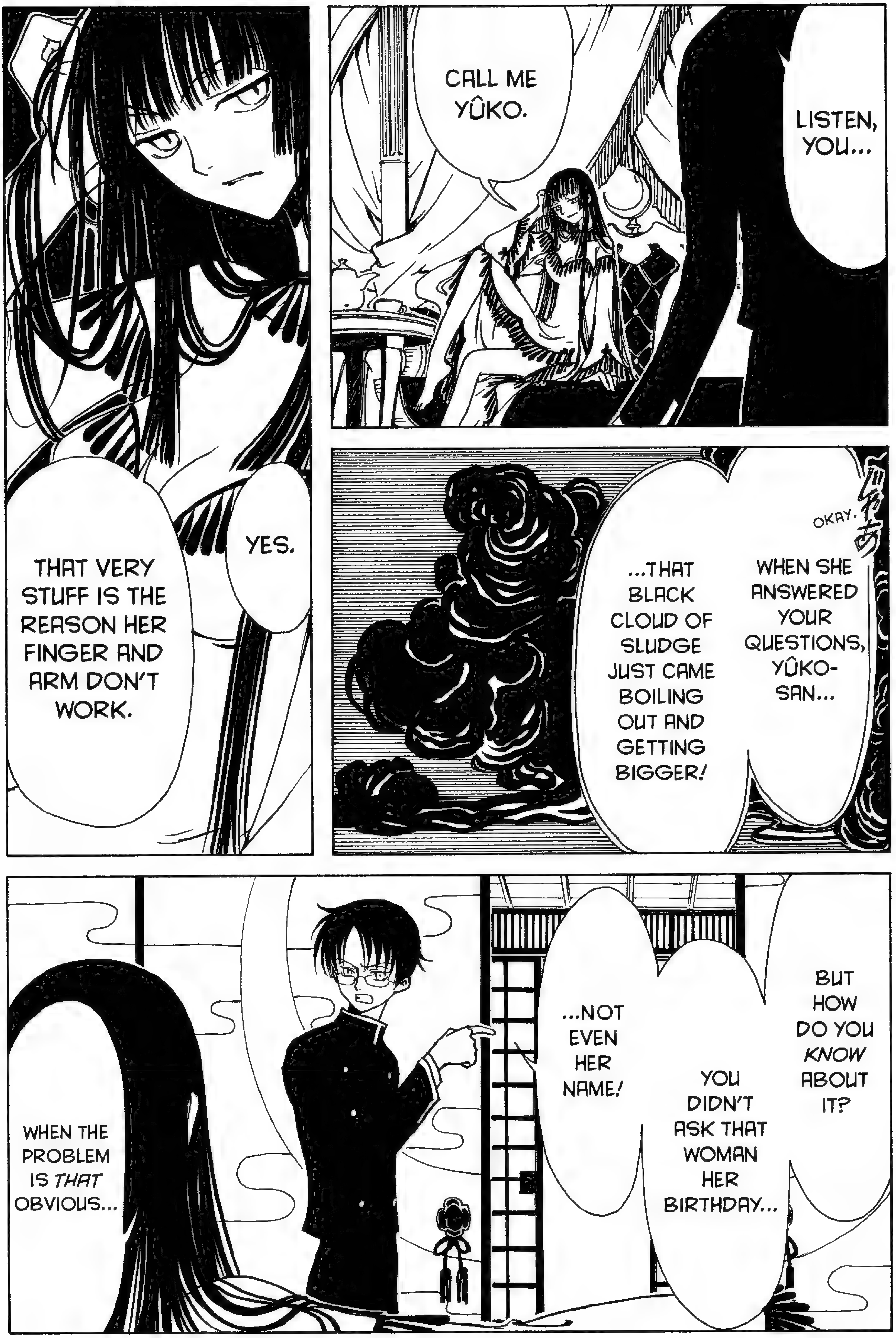

すす sss
?
す ss
す sss
HEY!
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT THE RING SEEMS DIRTIER THAN BEFORE.

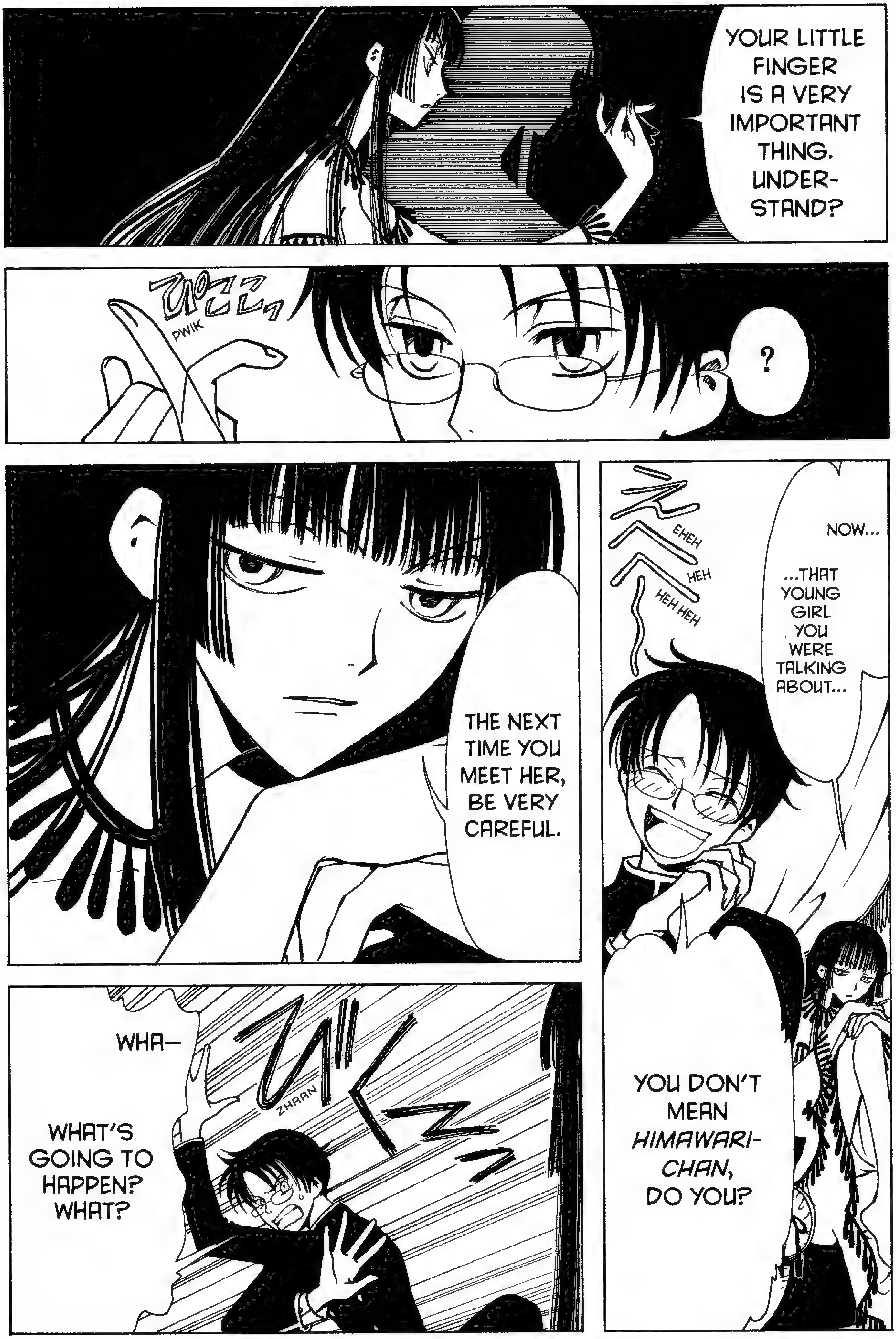
BAD HABITS?
I CAN'T SAY THAT ANY COME TO MIND.
AND YOU'RE SAYING THAT IF I KNEW, MY ARM WOULD GET BETTER.
IF YOU KNOW, AND GET HEALED.
I UNDERSTAND.
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT SOME MORE.
WOULD YOU LIKE A CUP OF TEA?
THAT'S VERY NICE OF YOU!
BUT I WAS ON MY WAY TO MEET SOMEONE!
MEET WHO?

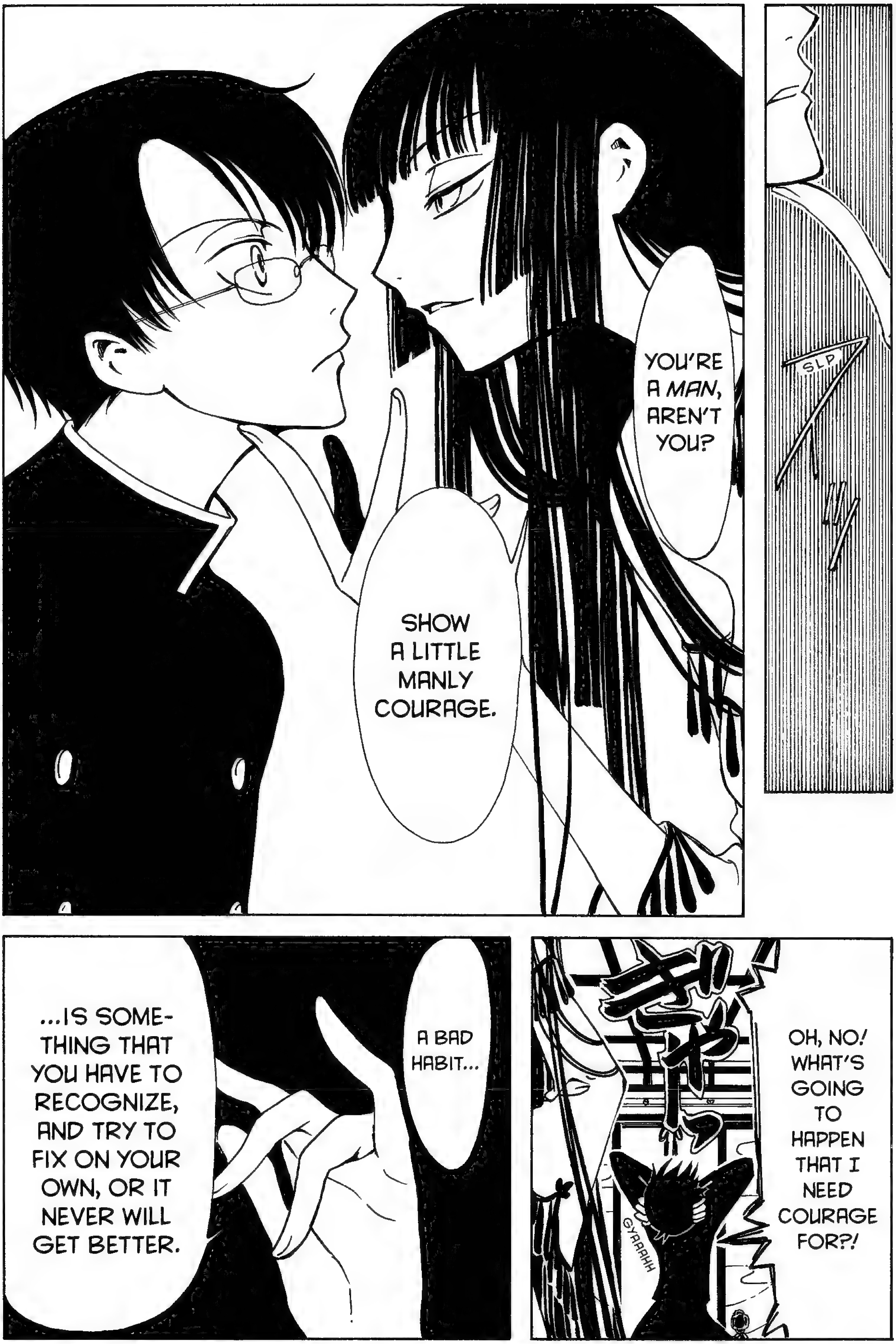

TO MEET...
BLOOG
ドロッ
...THE MAN I'M GOING OUT WITH.

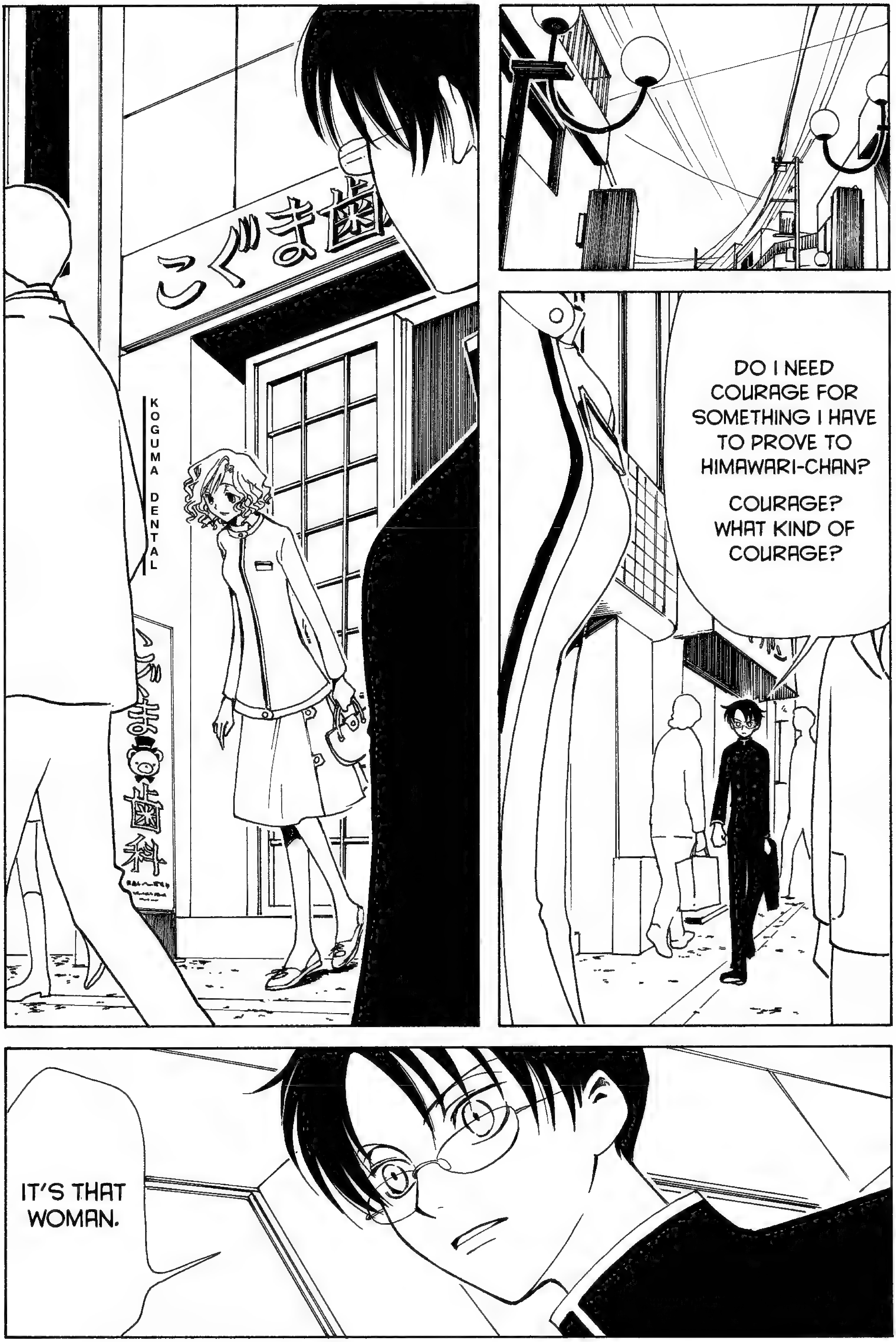

HAKK!
I SEE.
VERY WELL. TAKE CARE.
SURE!
NEXT TIME, I'LL BE SURE TO SAVE SOME TIME FOR TEA!
MARU, MORO, PLEASE SEE HER OUT.
ぱたぱた
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
OKAY! ♡

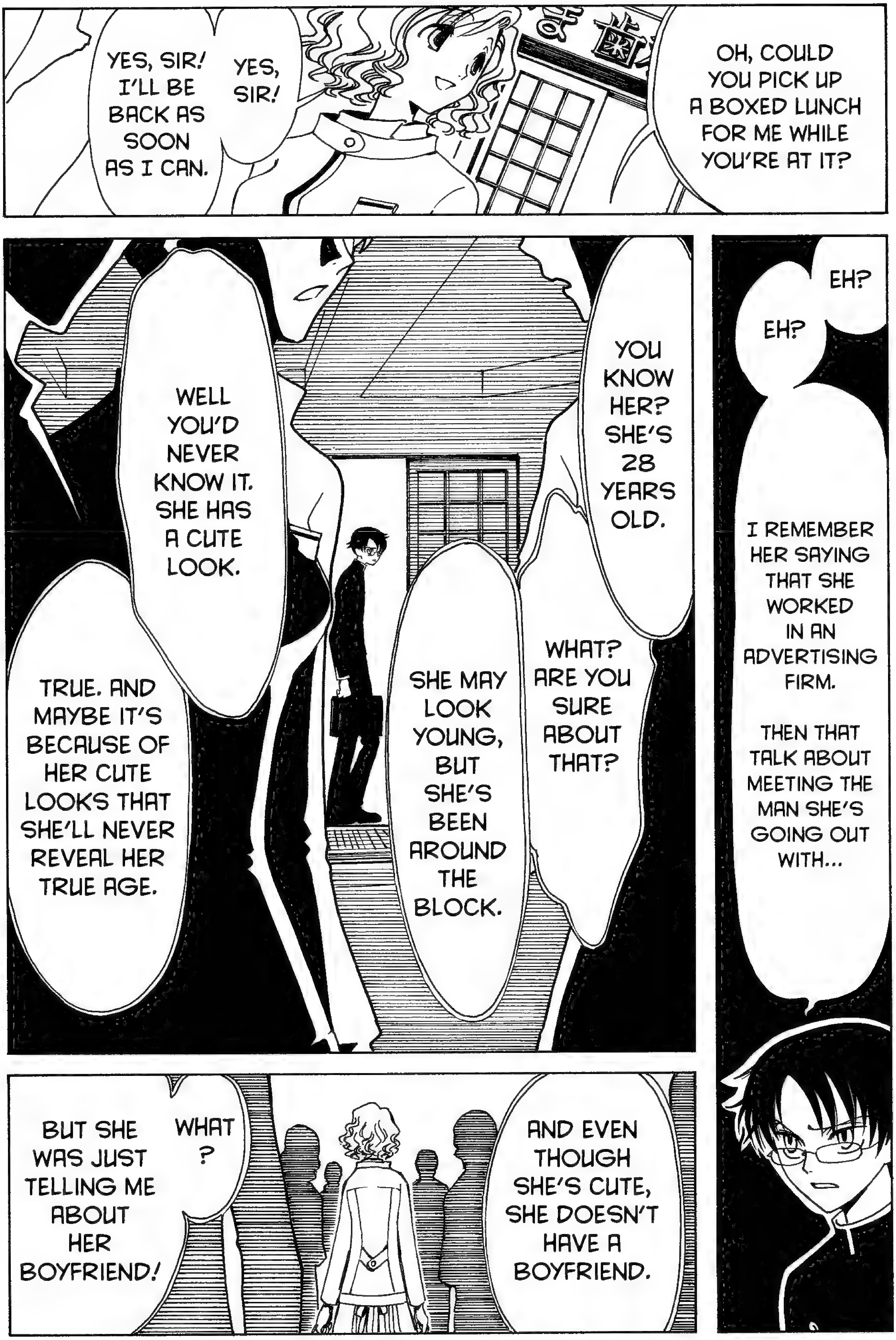

BUT...
I DOUBT THAT YOU WILL EVER ENTER THIS SHOP A "NEXT TIME."
HUH?
WHOOO
THAT WOMAN...
WHAT'S *WITH* HER?
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE SEEN IT.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
YOU *ARE* CURSED WITH SPIRIT VISION.

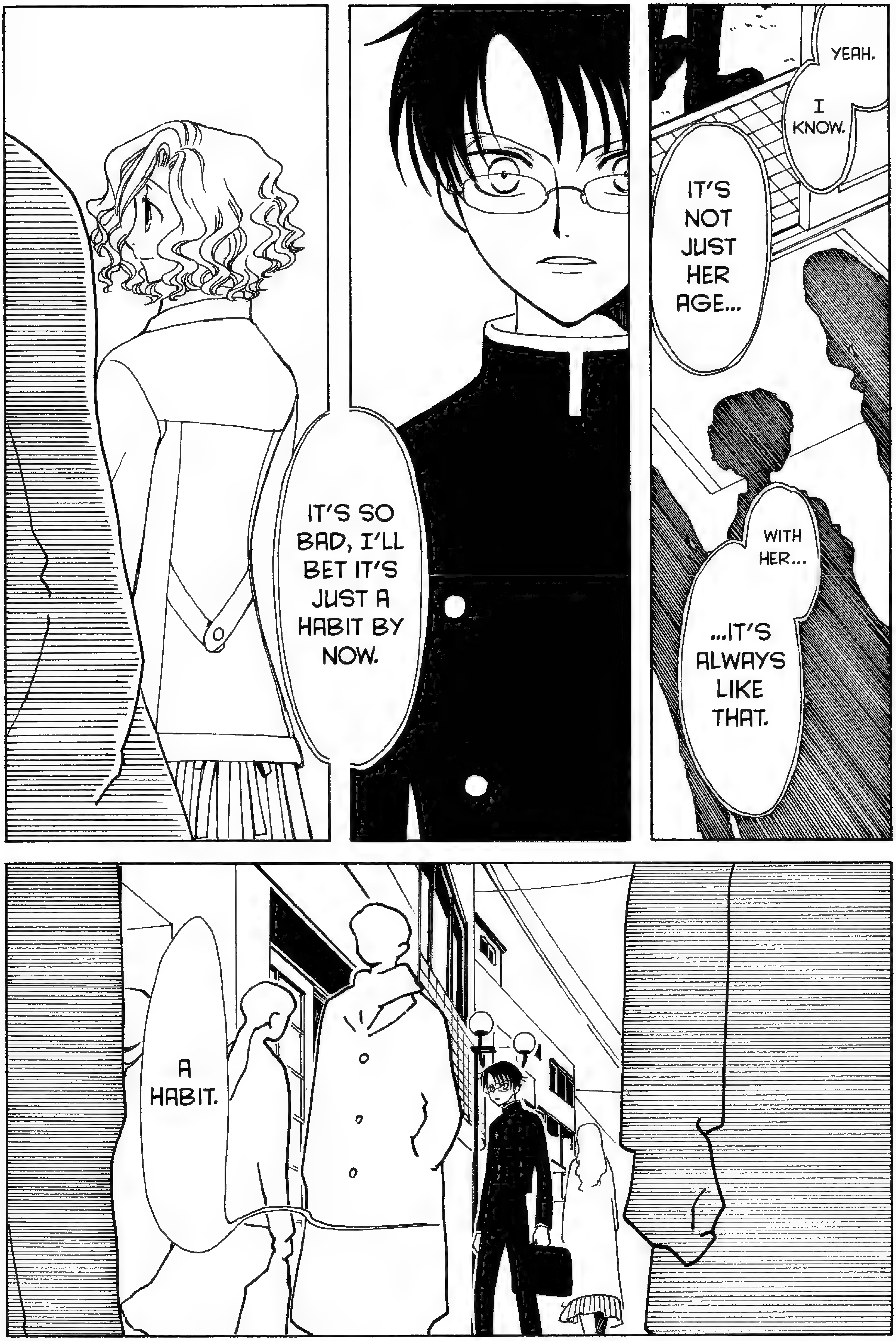

LISTEN, YOU...
CALL ME YÛKO.
WHEN SHE ANSWERED YOUR QUESTIONS, YÛKO-SAN...
OKAY.
...THAT BLACK CLOUD OF SLUDGE JUST CAME BOILING OUT AND GETTING BIGGER!
YES.
THAT VERY STUFF IS THE REASON HER FINGER AND ARM DON'T WORK.
BUT HOW DO YOU *KNOW* ABOUT IT?
YOU DIDN'T ASK THAT WOMAN HER BIRTHDAY...
...NOT EVEN HER NAME!
WHEN THE PROBLEM IS *THAT* OBVIOUS...


YOUR LITTLE FINGER IS A VERY IMPORTANT THING. UNDERSTAND?
ぴこここっ
PWIK
?
えへへへ
EHEH HEH HEH HEH
NOW...
...THAT YOUNG GIRL YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT...
YOU DON'T MEAN *HIMAWARI-CHAN*, DO YOU?
THE NEXT TIME YOU MEET HER, BE VERY CAREFUL.
びくん
ZHAAN
WHA-
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN? WHAT?

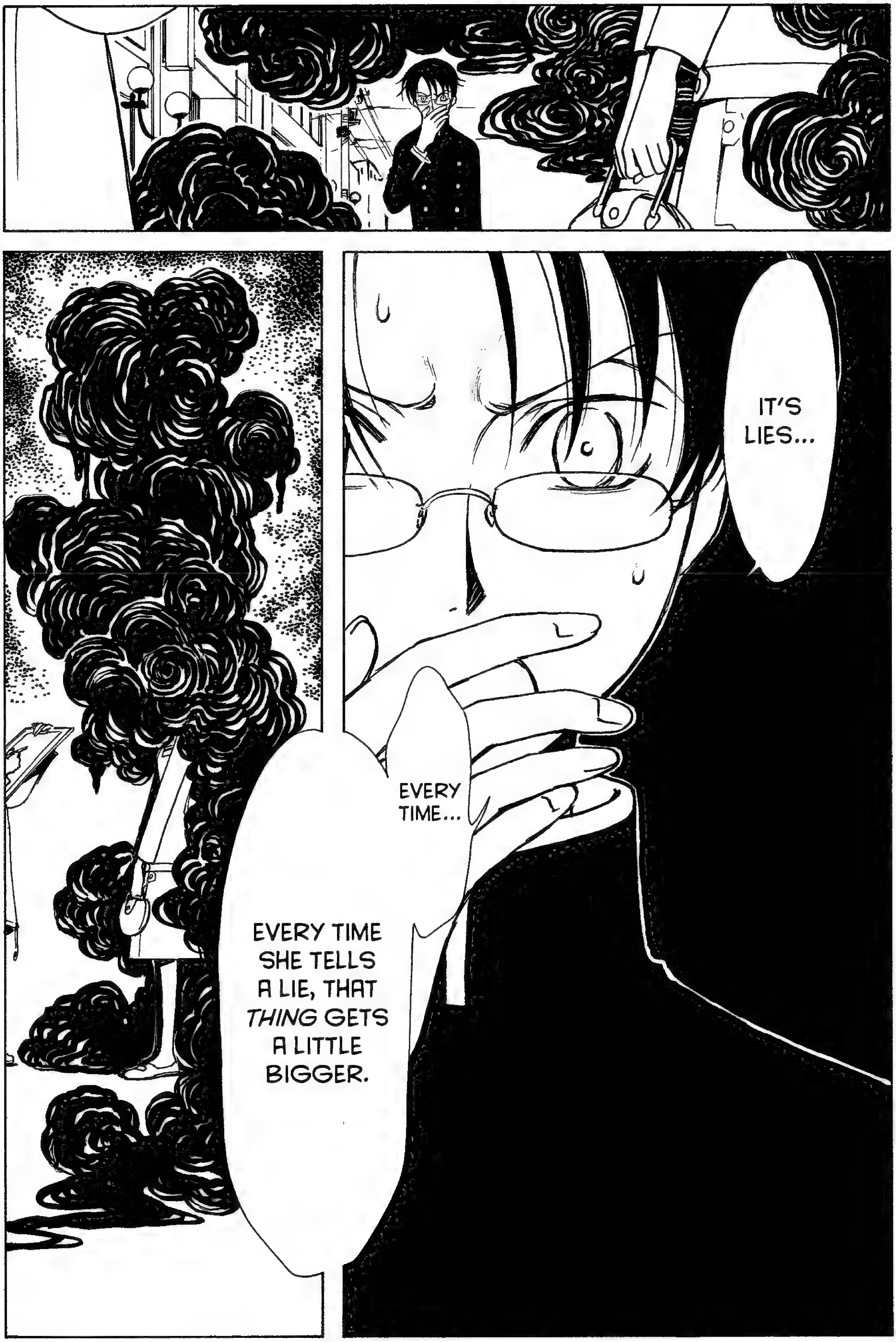

SLP
YOU'RE A *MAN*, AREN'T YOU?
SHOW A LITTLE MANLY COURAGE.
OH, NO! WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN THAT I NEED COURAGE FOR?!
GYAAAHH
A BAD HABIT...
...IS SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE TO RECOGNIZE, AND TRY TO FIX ON YOUR OWN, OR IT NEVER WILL GET BETTER.

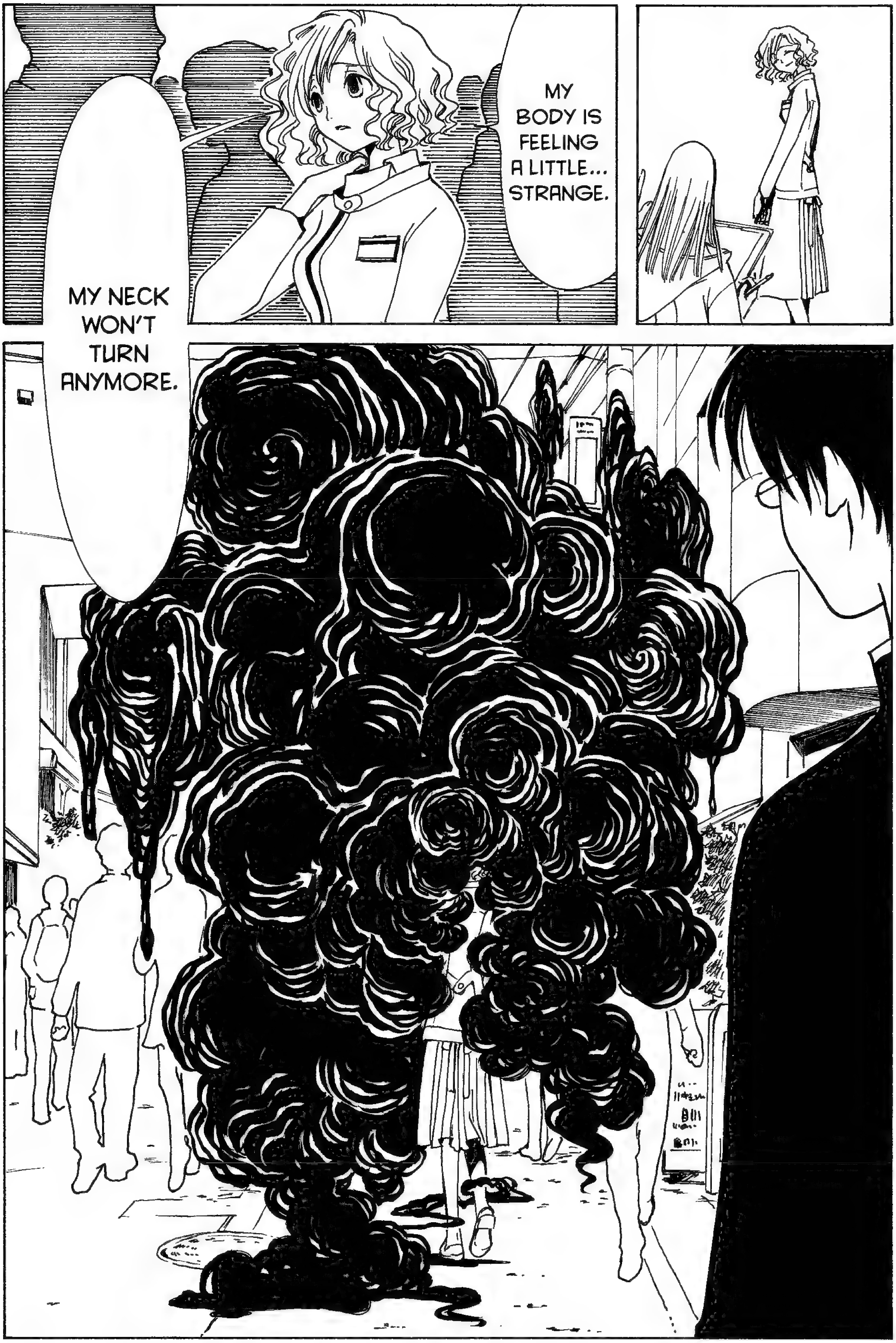

DO I NEED COURAGE FOR SOMETHING I HAVE TO PROVE TO HIMAWARI-CHAN?
COURAGE? WHAT KIND OF COURAGE?
こぐま歯
KOGUMA DENTAL
こぐま歯科
IT'S THAT WOMAN.


OH, COULD YOU PICK UP A BOXED LUNCH FOR ME WHILE YOU'RE AT IT?
YES, SIR!
YES, SIR! I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN.
YOU KNOW HER? SHE'S 28 YEARS OLD.
WHAT? ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
SHE MAY LOOK YOUNG, BUT SHE'S BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK.
WELL YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT. SHE HAS A CUTE LOOK.
TRUE. AND MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE OF HER CUTE LOOKS THAT SHE'LL NEVER REVEAL HER TRUE AGE.
EH?
EH?
I REMEMBER HER SAYING THAT SHE WORKED IN AN ADVERTISING FIRM.
THEN THAT TALK ABOUT MEETING THE MAN SHE'S GOING OUT WITH...
AND EVEN THOUGH SHE'S CUTE, SHE DOESN'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND.
WHAT?
BUT SHE WAS JUST TELLING ME ABOUT HER BOYFRIEND!

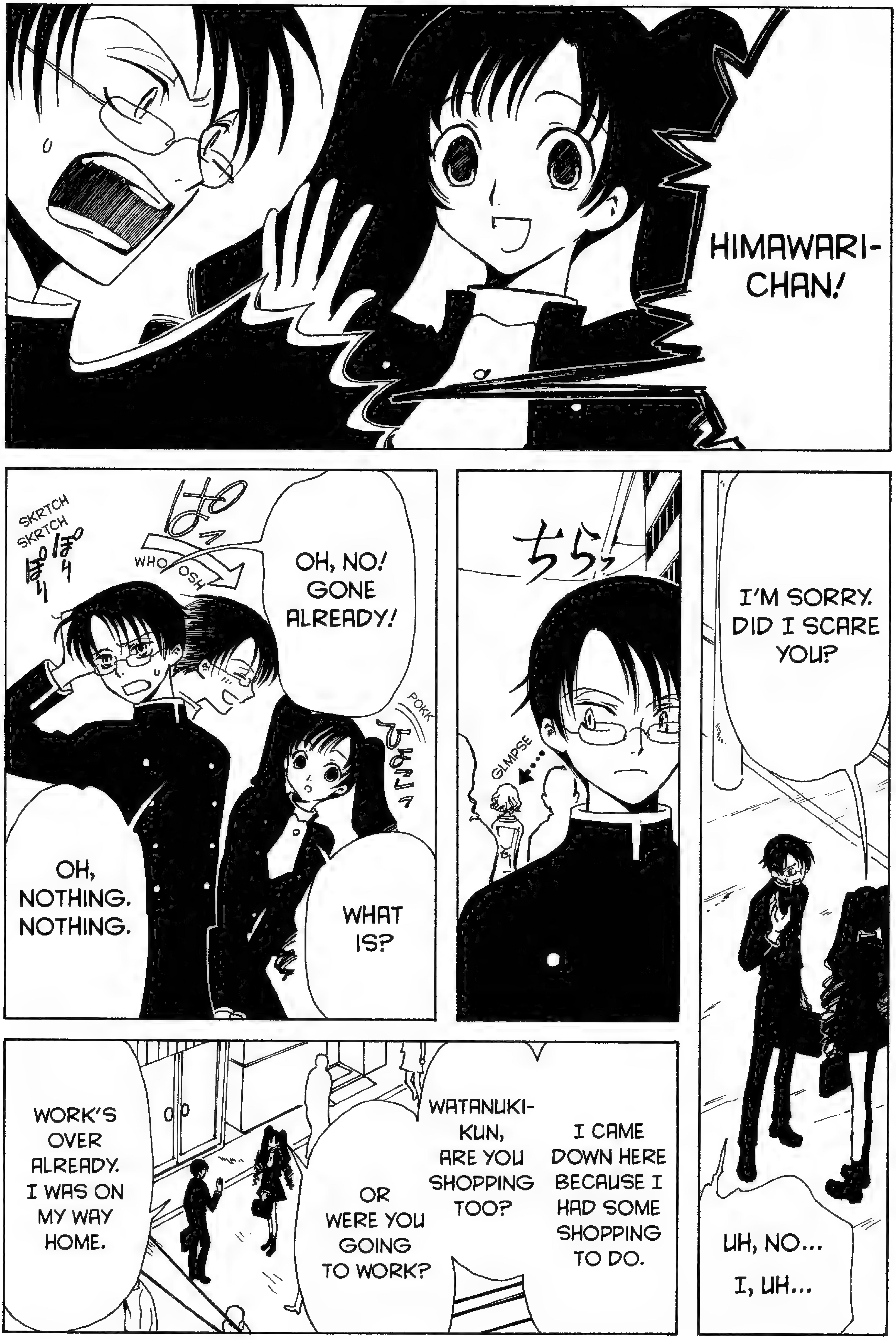

YEAH. I KNOW.
IT'S NOT JUST HER AGE...
WITH HER...
...IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
IT'S SO BAD, I'LL BET IT'S JUST A HABIT BY NOW.
A HABIT.

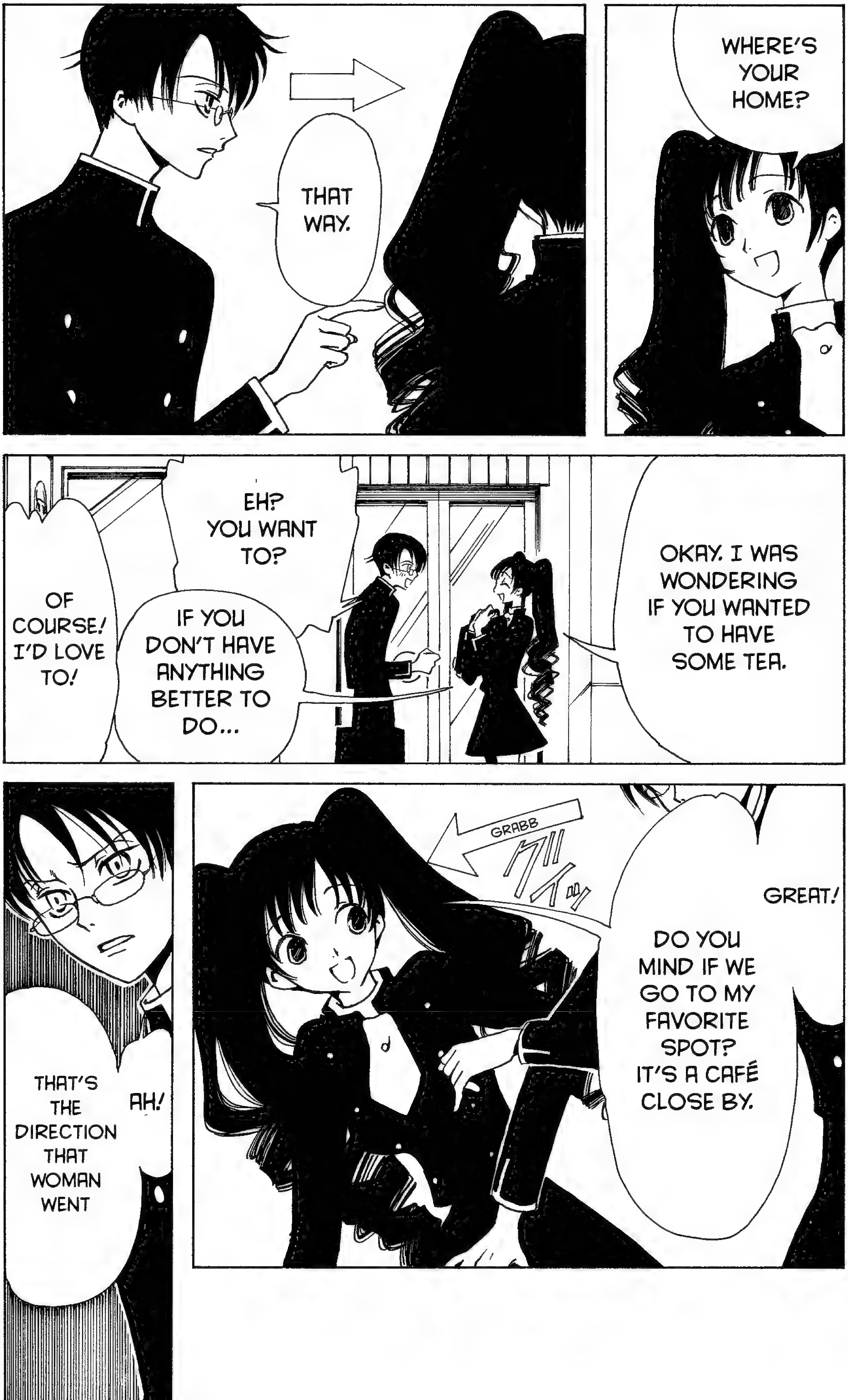
EXCUSE ME, COULD YOU ASSIST IN A SURVEY?
OKAY.
IT'S JUST FOR THE STATS—HOW OLD ARE YOU?
22 YEARS OLD.
BLOOG
YOUR JOB?
I WORK IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY.

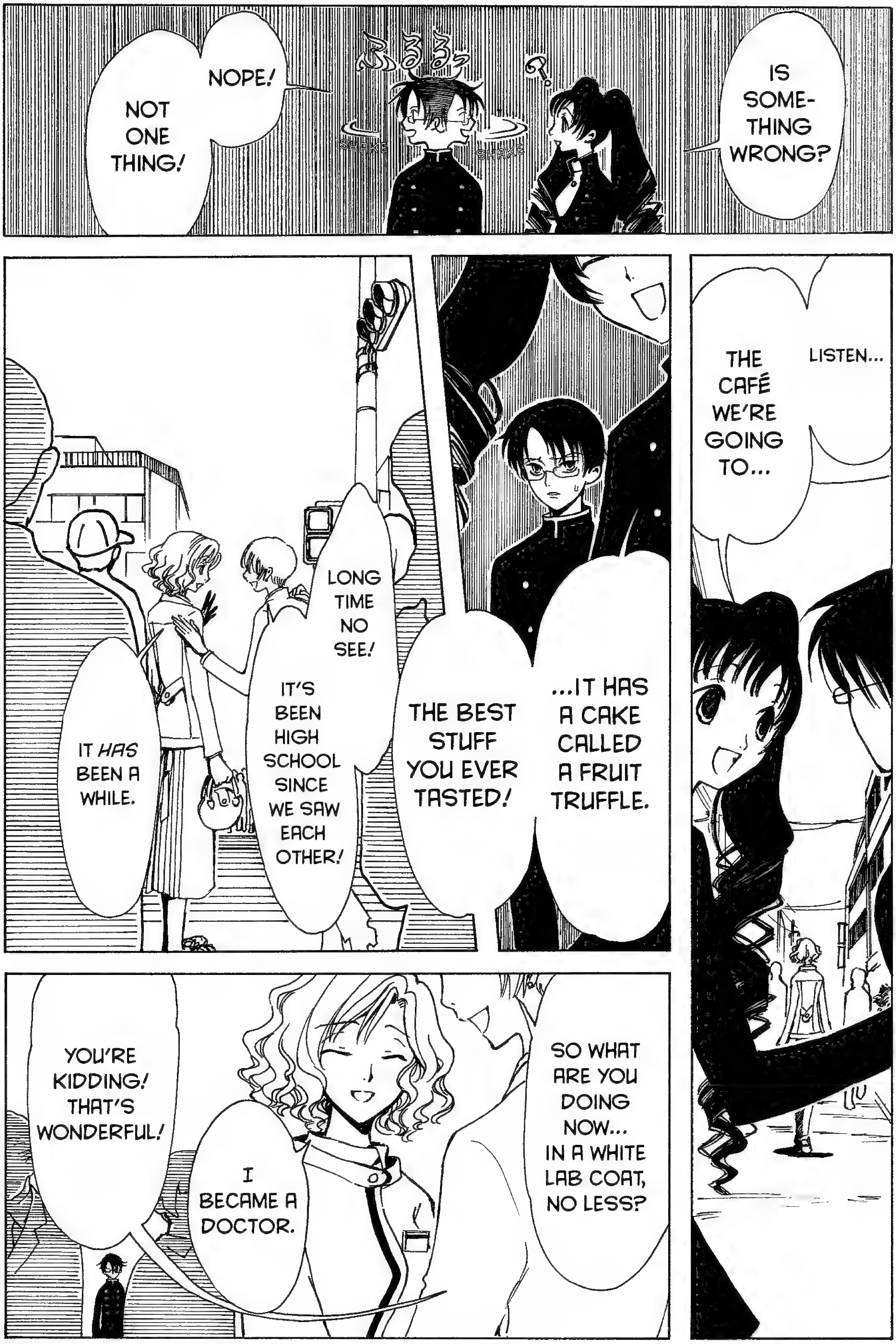

IT'S LIES...
EVERY TIME...
EVERY TIME SHE TELLS A LIE, THAT *THING* GETS A LITTLE BIGGER.

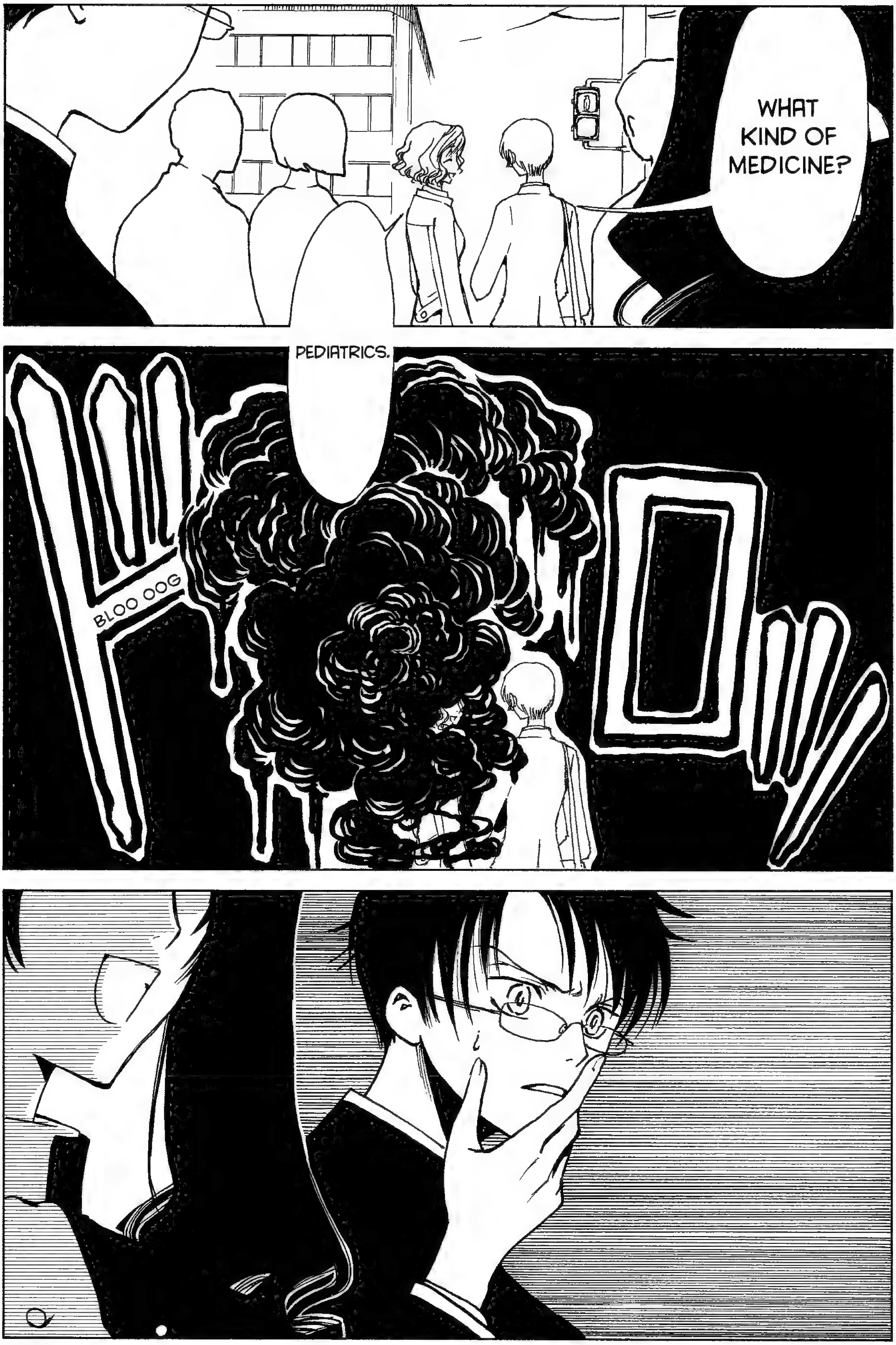

MY BODY IS FEELING A LITTLE... STRANGE.
MY NECK WON'T TURN ANYMORE.

THE RING..
IT'S ALMOST BLACK WITH DIRT!
SSSP
WAAHH!

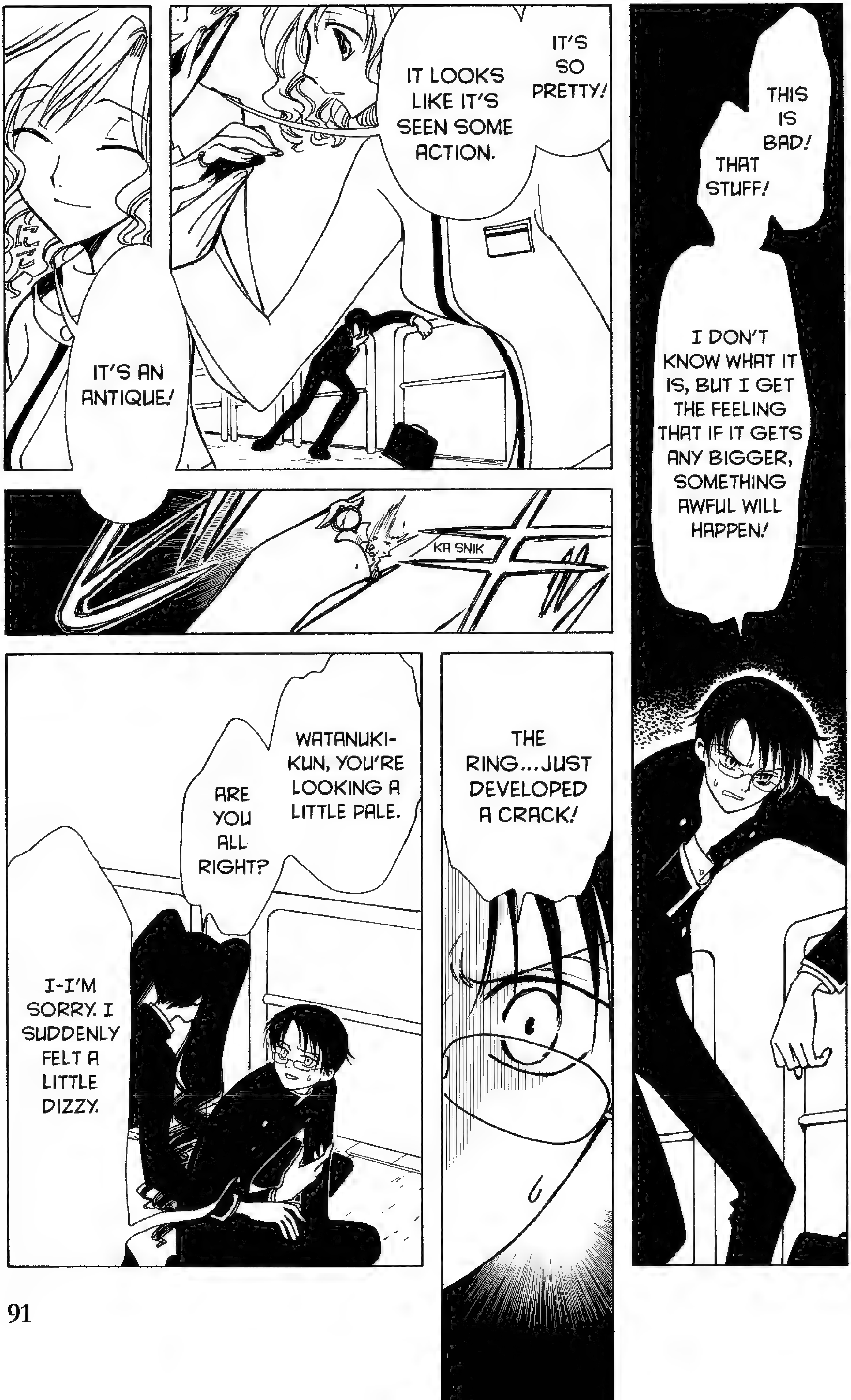

HIMAWARI-CHAN!
I'M SORRY. DID I SCARE YOU?
UH, NO... I, UH...
ちら
GLIMPSE
OH, NO! GONE ALREADY!
ぱっ
WHOOSH
SKRTCH SKRTCH
ぽりぽり
POKK
ひょこっ
WHAT IS?
OH, NOTHING. NOTHING.
I CAME DOWN HERE BECAUSE I HAD SOME SHOPPING TO DO.
WATANUKI-KUN, ARE YOU SHOPPING TOO?
OR WERE YOU GOING TO WORK?
WORK'S OVER ALREADY. I WAS ON MY WAY HOME.

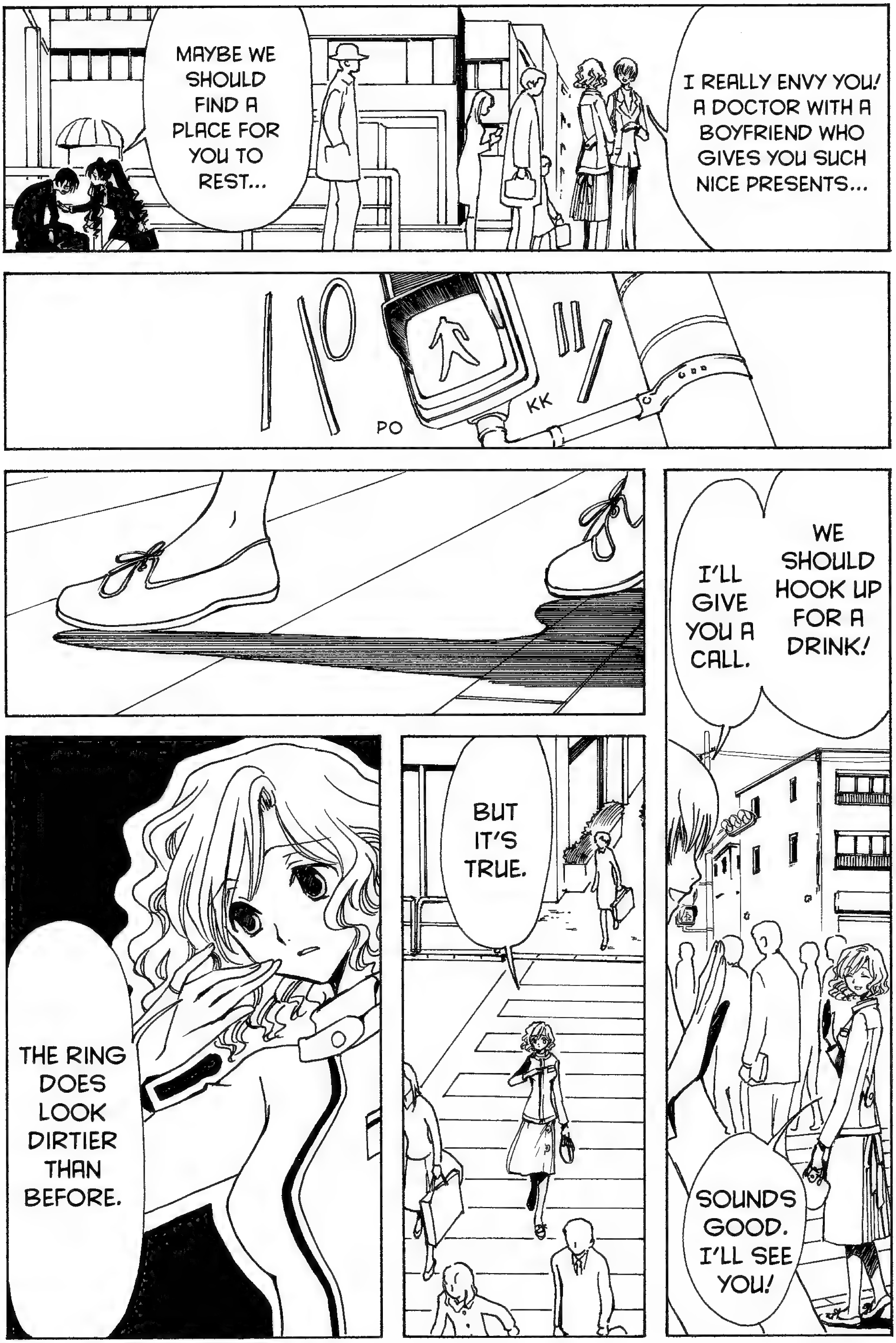

WHERE'S YOUR HOME?
THAT WAY.
OKAY. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU WANTED TO HAVE SOME TEA.
EH? YOU WANT TO?
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING BETTER TO DO...
OF COURSE! I'D LOVE TO!
GREAT!
DO YOU MIND IF WE GO TO MY FAVORITE SPOT? IT'S A CAFÉ CLOSE BY.
GRABB
グイッ
AH!
THAT'S THE DIRECTION THAT WOMAN WENT


IS SOMETHING WRONG?
?
SHAKE SHAKE
ふるるっ
NOPE!
NOT ONE THING!
LISTEN...
THE CAFÉ WE'RE GOING TO...
...IT HAS A CAKE CALLED A FRUIT TRUFFLE.
THE BEST STUFF YOU EVER TASTED!
LONG TIME NO SEE!
IT'S BEEN HIGH SCHOOL SINCE WE SAW EACH OTHER!
IT *HAS* BEEN A WHILE.
SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW... IN A WHITE LAB COAT, NO LESS?
I BECAME A DOCTOR.
YOU'RE KIDDING! THAT'S WONDERFUL!

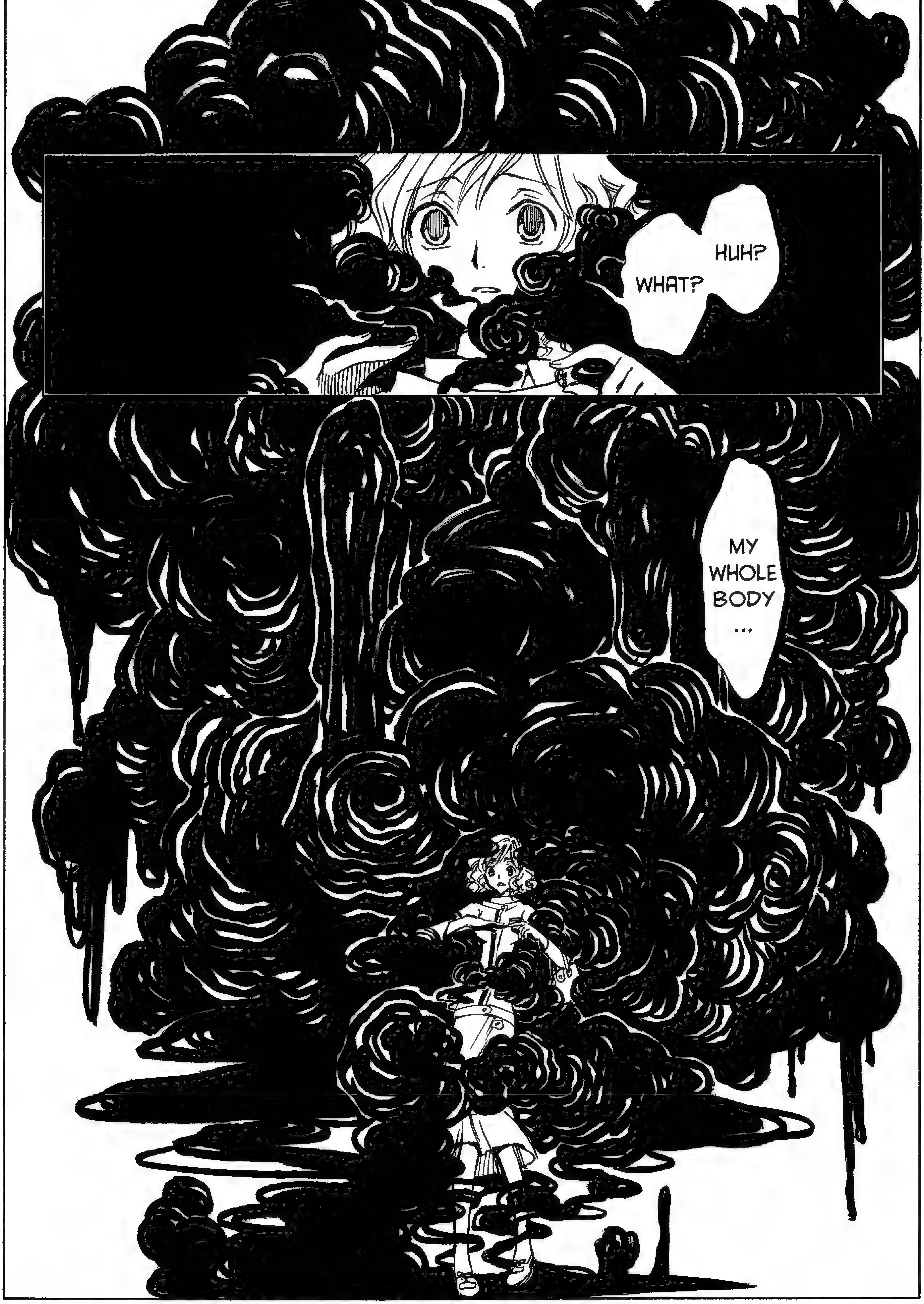

WHAT KIND OF MEDICINE?
PEDIATRICS.
BLOO OOG

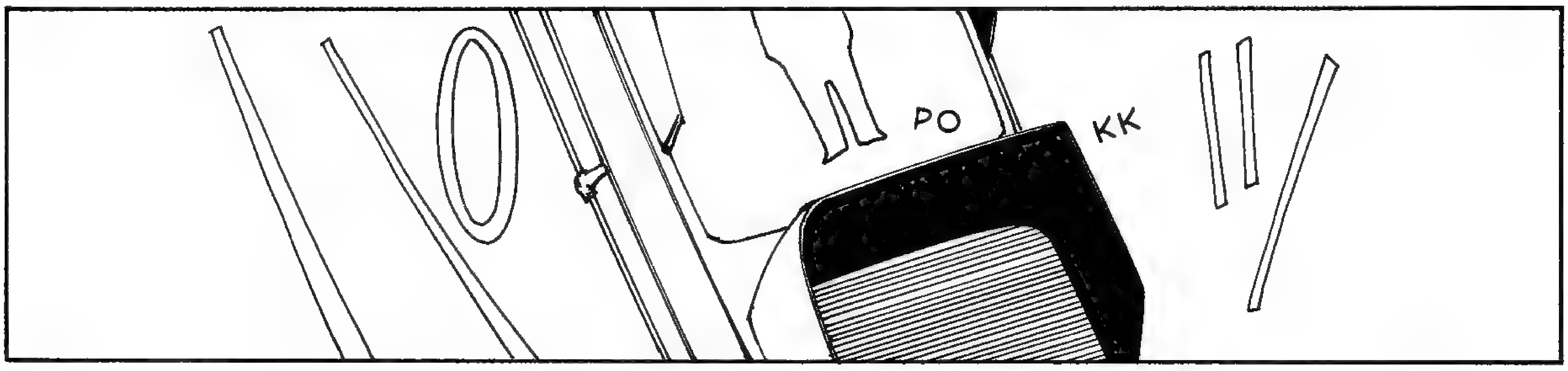
ARE YOU MARRIED?
NOT YET, BUT THERE'S A MAN I'M SEEING...
I GET IT!
YOU GOT THE RING FROM *HIM!*
THAT'S RIGHT.
GAK!
WATANUKI-KUN?


THIS IS BAD! THAT STUFF!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT I GET THE FEELING THAT IF IT GETS ANY BIGGER, SOMETHING AWFUL WILL HAPPEN!
IT'S SO PRETTY!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S SEEN SOME ACTION.
IT'S AN ANTIQUE!
KA SNIK
THE RING...JUST DEVELOPED A CRACK!
WATANUKI-KUN, YOU'RE LOOKING A LITTLE PALE.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I-I'M SORRY. I SUDDENLY FELT A LITTLE DIZZY.

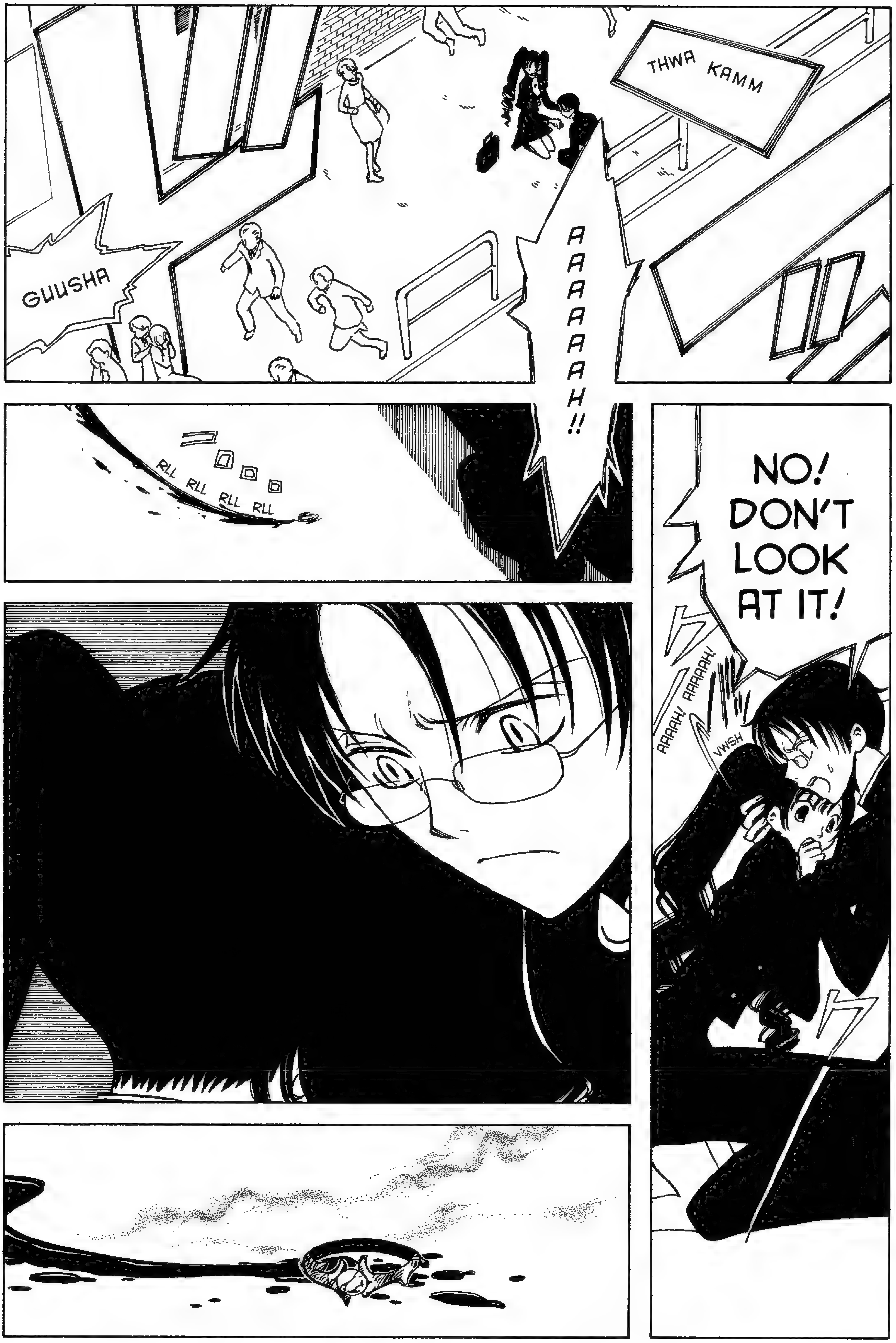

I REALLY ENVY YOU! A DOCTOR WITH A BOYFRIEND WHO GIVES YOU SUCH NICE PRESENTS...
MAYBE WE SHOULD FIND A PLACE FOR YOU TO REST...
KK
PO
WE SHOULD HOOK UP FOR A DRINK!
I'LL GIVE YOU A CALL.
SOUNDS GOOD. I'LL SEE YOU!
BUT IT'S TRUE.
THE RING DOES LOOK DIRTIER THAN BEFORE.

IF I TAKE IT OFF, MAYBE I CAN CLEAN IT...
ZLIPP
AH!
NO! DON'T TAKE THAT OFF!!
BLOOOG

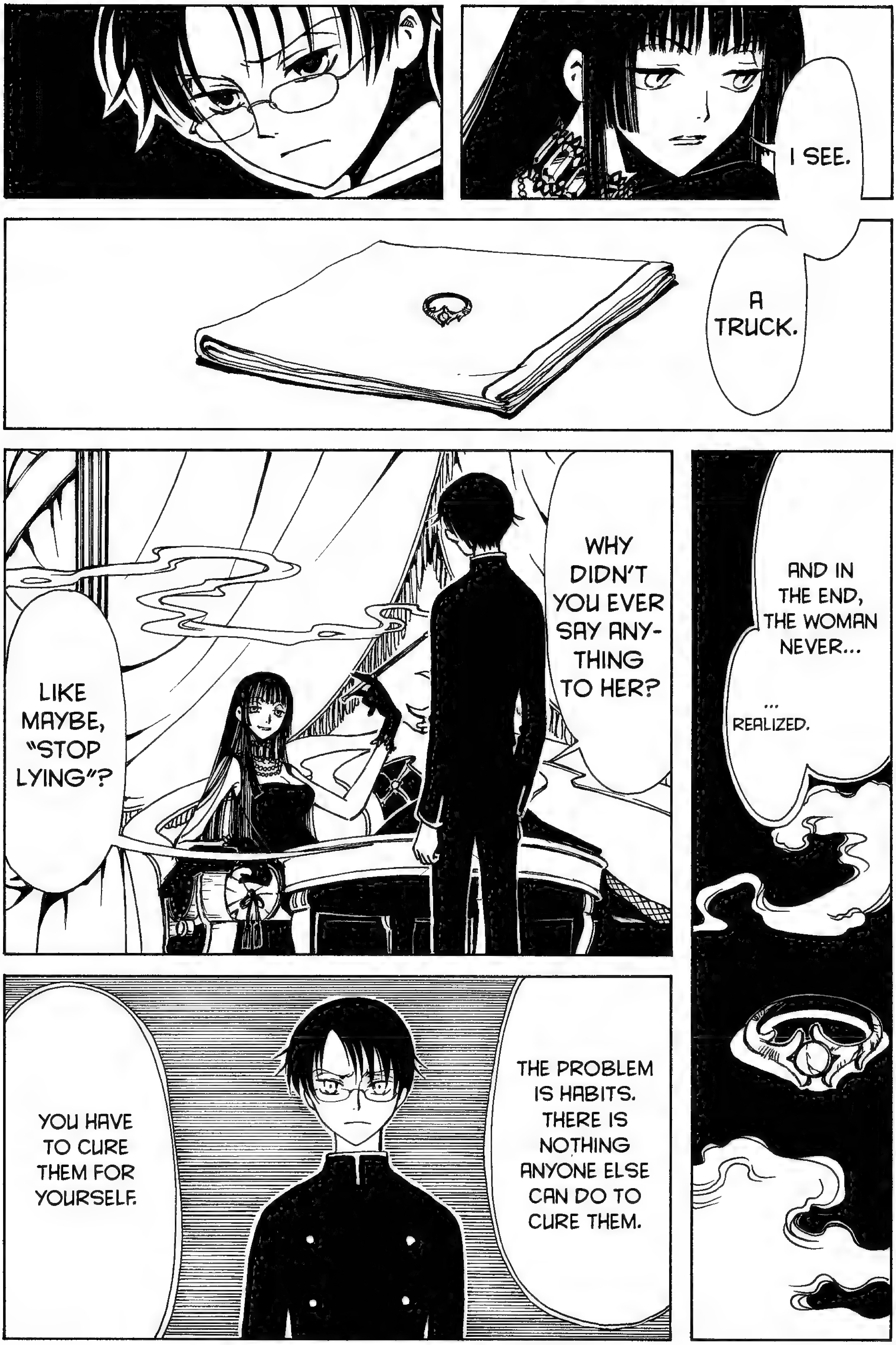

HUH?
WHAT?
MY WHOLE BODY ...

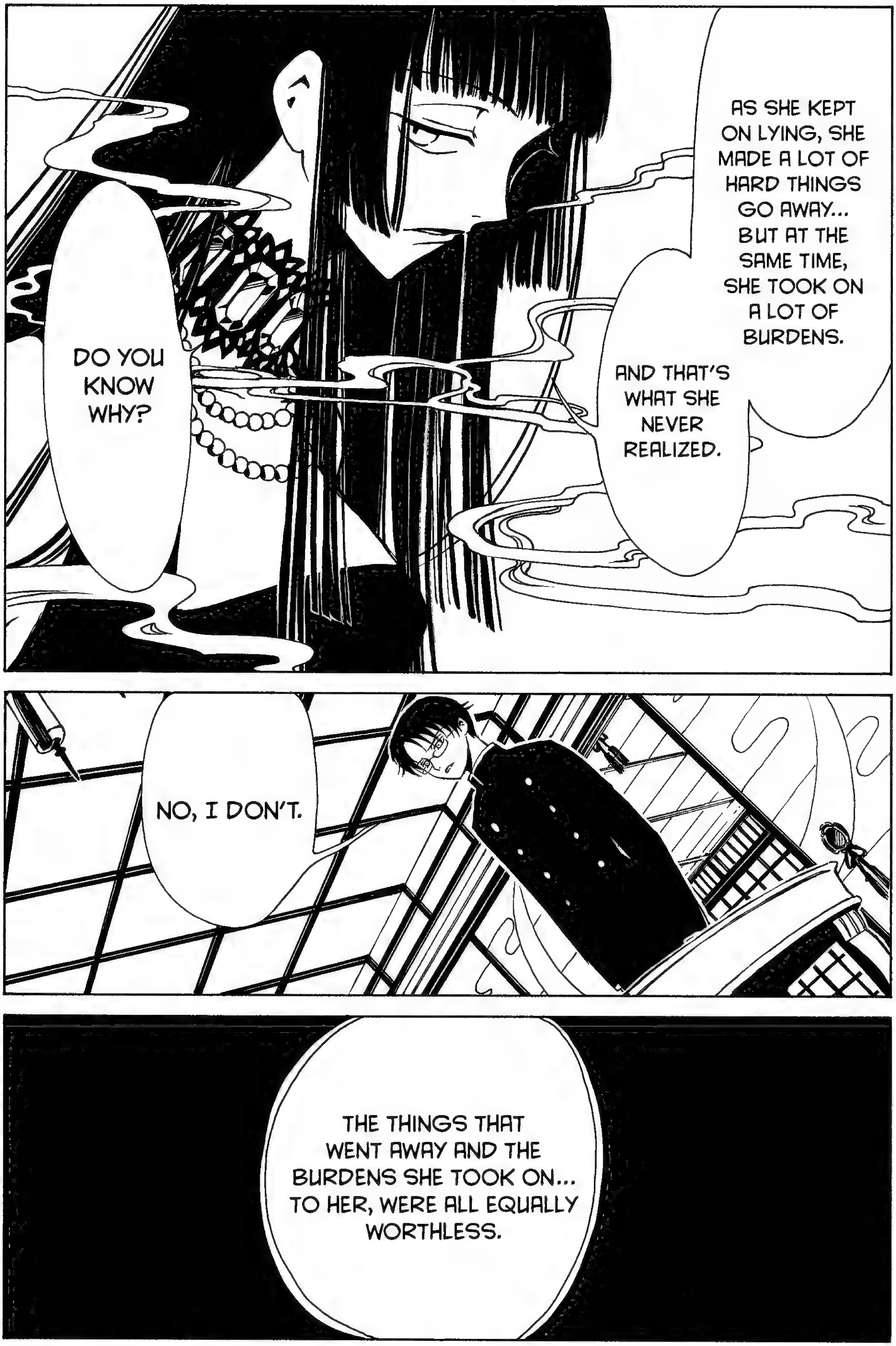

PO KK

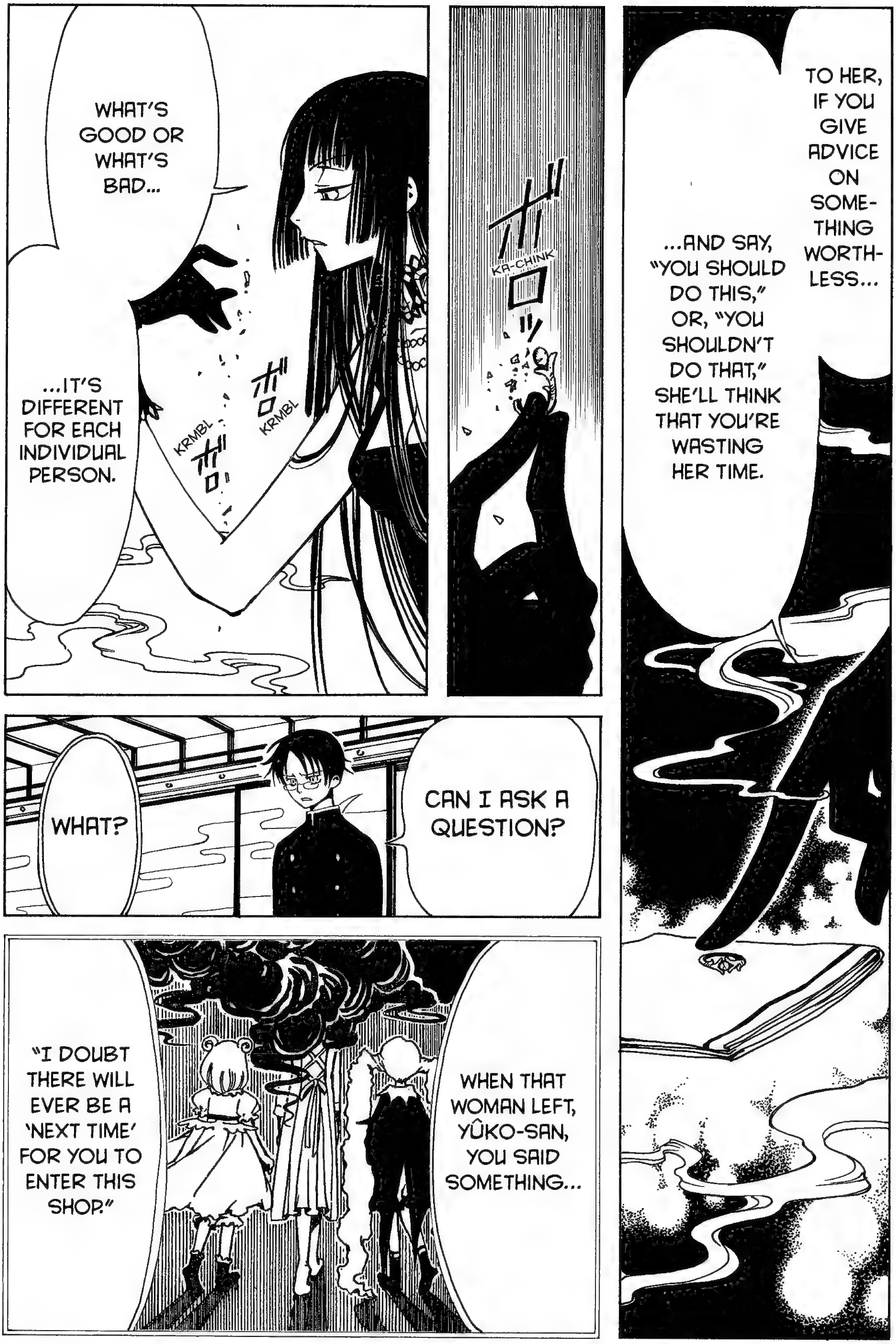
HO-HOONNN
MY WHOLE BODY ...
... REFUSES TO MOVE...
SKREEEEEECH
AAAHH!
LOOK OUT!!

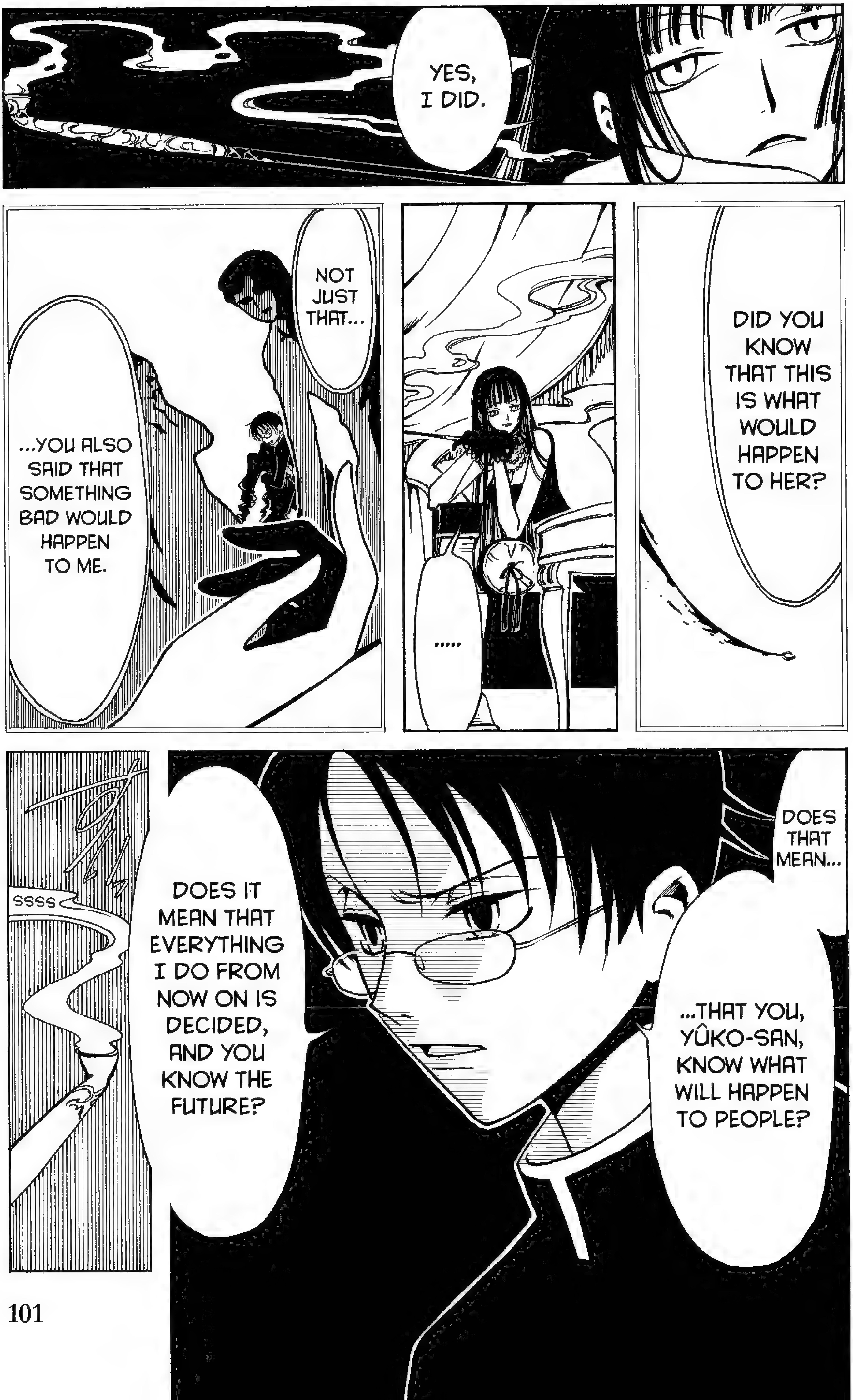

THWA KAMM
AAAAAAAH!!
GUUSHA
RLL RLL RLL RLL
NO! DON'T LOOK AT IT!
AAAAH! AAAAAH!
VWSH

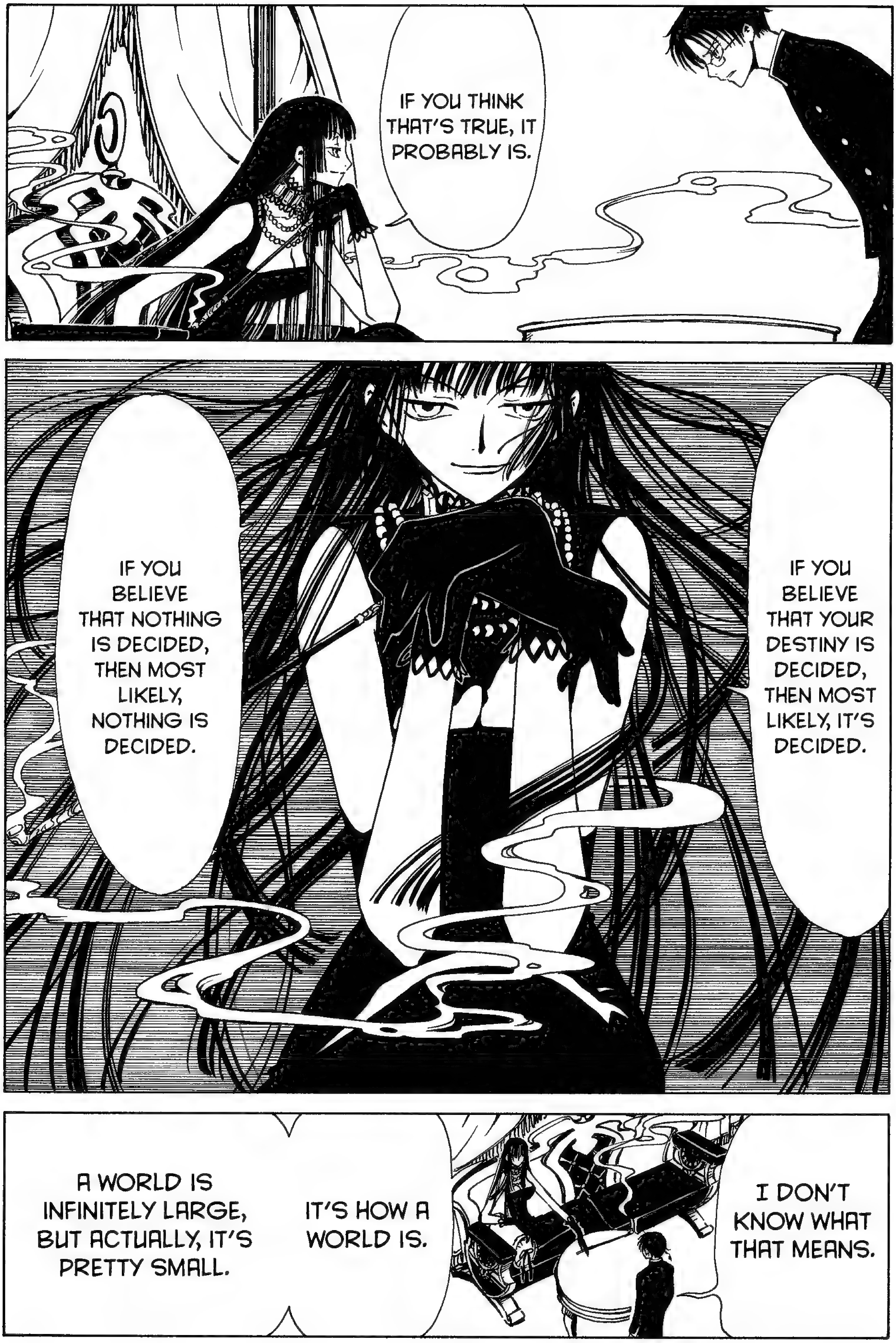
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜


I SEE.
A TRUCK.
AND IN THE END, THE WOMAN NEVER...
...REALIZED.
WHY DIDN'T YOU EVER SAY ANYTHING TO HER?
LIKE MAYBE, "STOP LYING"?
THE PROBLEM IS HABITS. THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE ELSE CAN DO TO CURE THEM.
YOU HAVE TO CURE THEM FOR YOURSELF.

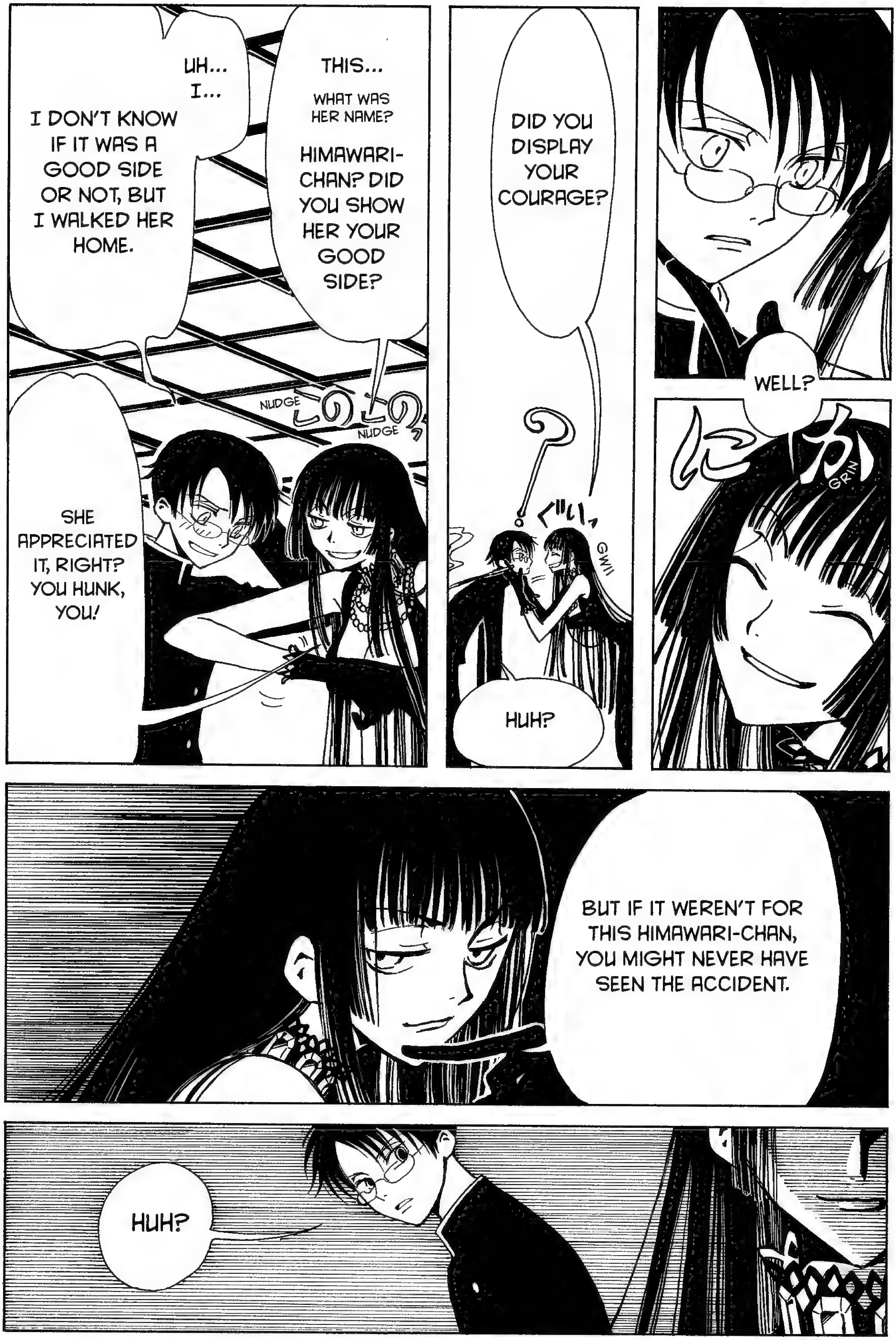

AS SHE KEPT ON LYING, SHE MADE A LOT OF HARD THINGS GO AWAY... BUT AT THE SAME TIME, SHE TOOK ON A LOT OF BURDENS.
AND THAT'S WHAT SHE NEVER REALIZED.
DO YOU KNOW WHY?
NO, I DON'T.
THE THINGS THAT WENT AWAY AND THE BURDENS SHE TOOK ON... TO HER, WERE ALL EQUALLY WORTHLESS.

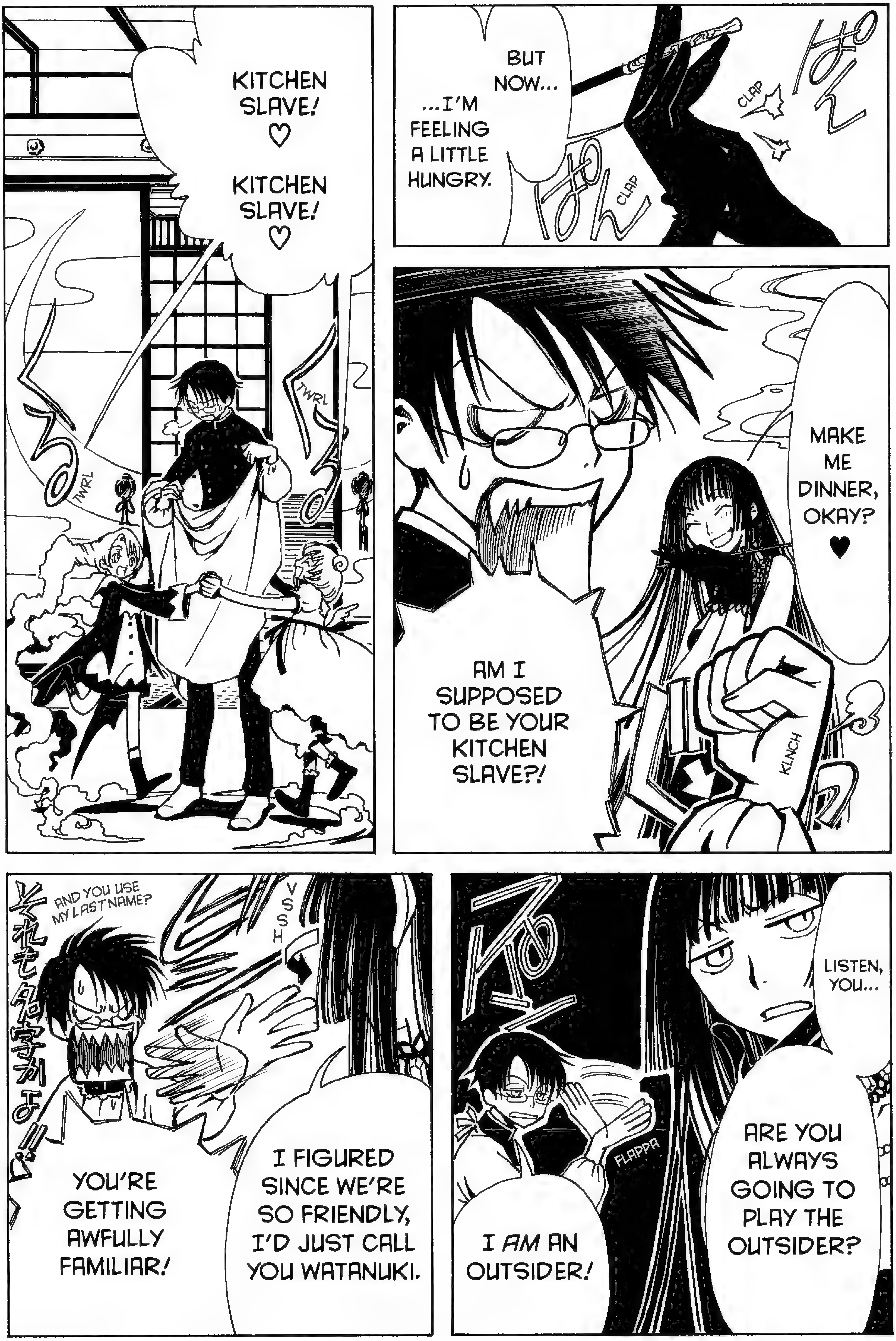

TO HER, IF YOU GIVE ADVICE ON SOMETHING WORTHLESS...
...AND SAY, "YOU SHOULD DO THIS," OR, "YOU SHOULDN'T DO THAT," SHE'LL THINK THAT YOU'RE WASTING HER TIME.
ガリ
KA-CHINK
WHAT'S GOOD OR WHAT'S BAD...
...IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL PERSON.
ボロ
KRMBL
ボロ
KRMBL
CAN I ASK A QUESTION?
WHAT?
WHEN THAT WOMAN LEFT, YÛKO-SAN, YOU SAID SOMETHING...
"I DOUBT THERE WILL EVER BE A 'NEXT TIME' FOR YOU TO ENTER THIS SHOP."

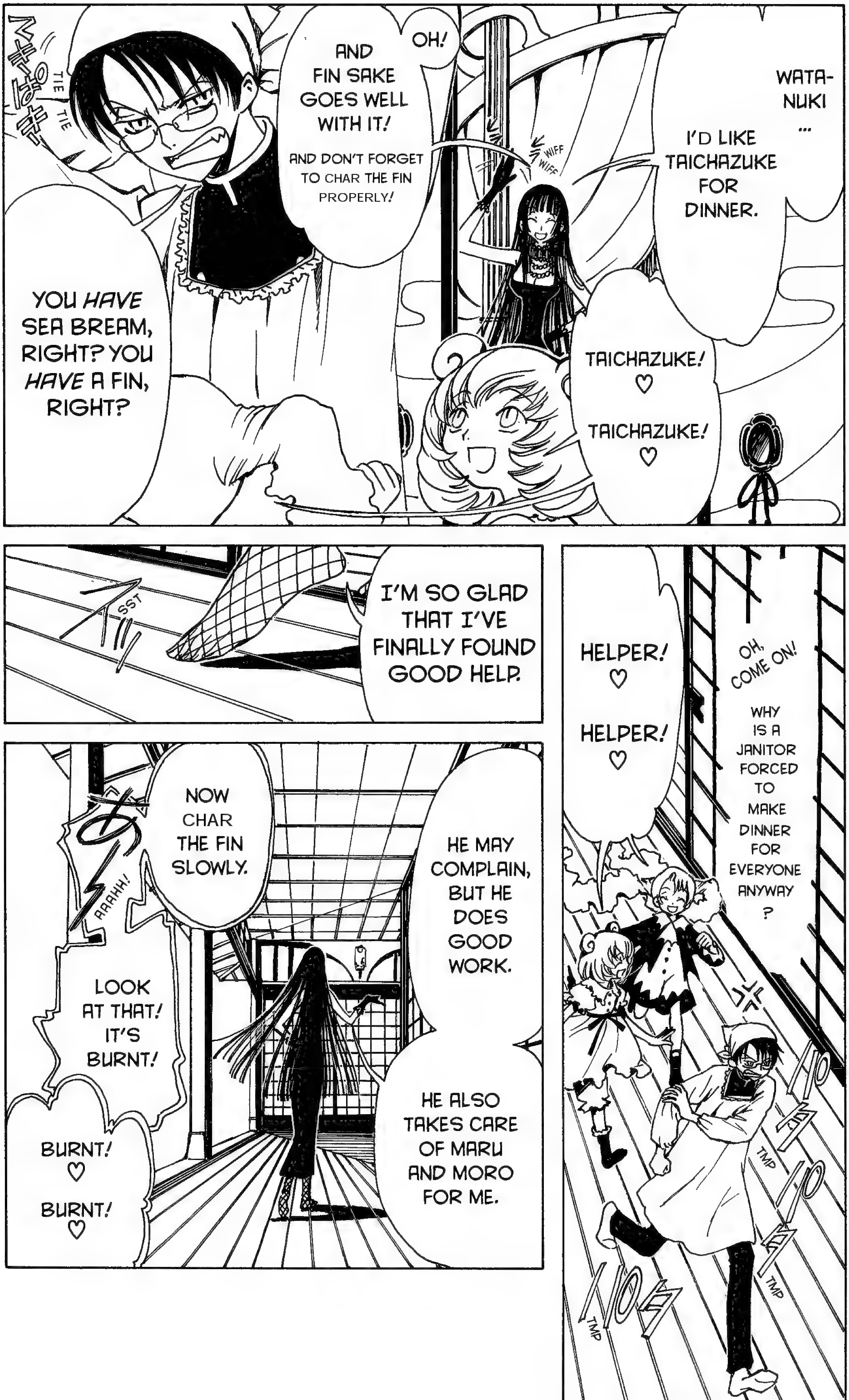

YES, I DID.
DID YOU KNOW THAT THIS IS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO HER?
.....
NOT JUST THAT...
...YOU ALSO SAID THAT SOMETHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN TO ME.
DOES THAT MEAN...
...THAT YOU, YÛKO-SAN, KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO PEOPLE?
DOES IT MEAN THAT EVERYTHING I DO FROM NOW ON IS DECIDED, AND YOU KNOW THE FUTURE?
SSSS

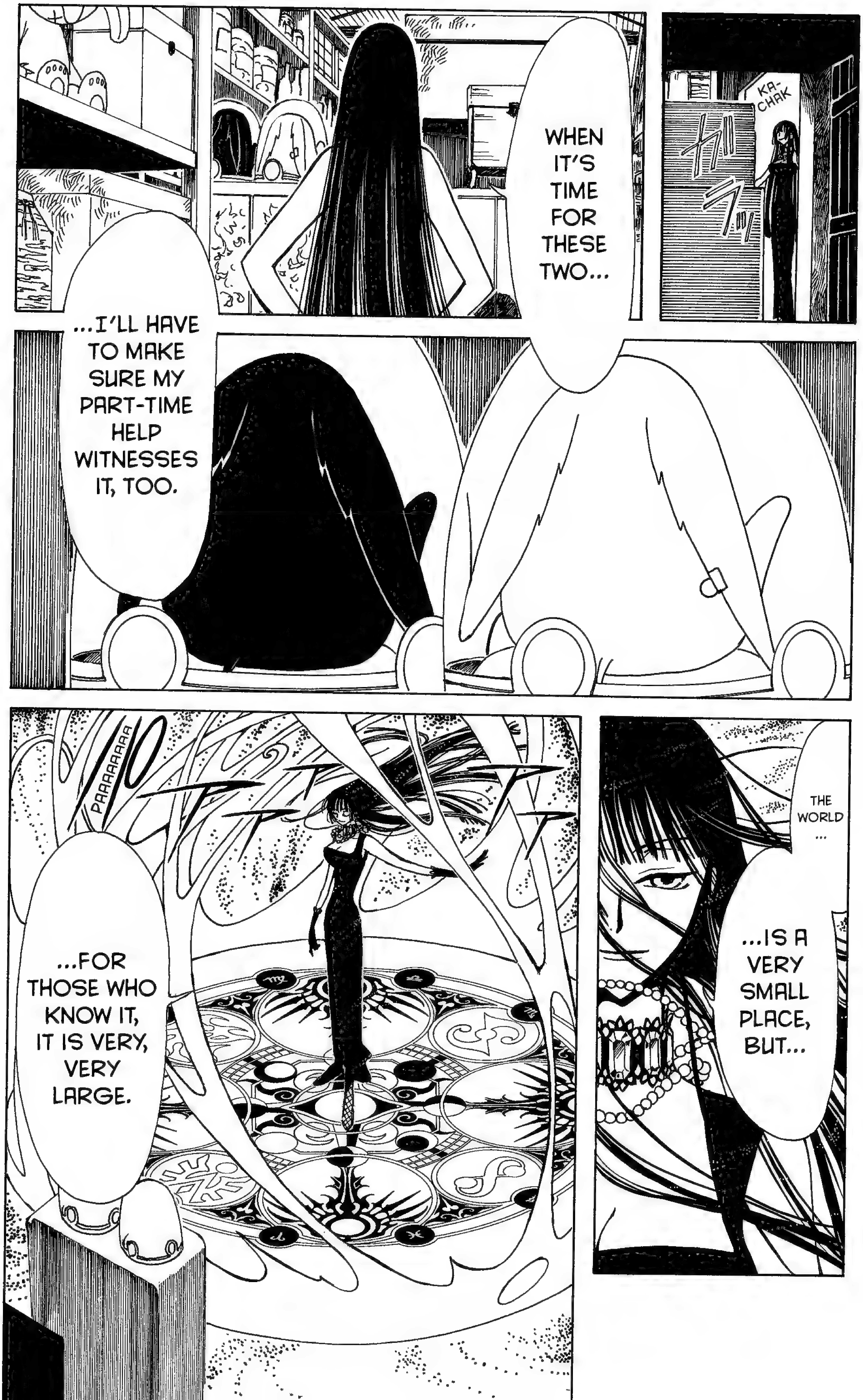

IF YOU THINK THAT'S TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS.
IF YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR DESTINY IS DECIDED, THEN MOST LIKELY, IT'S DECIDED.
IF YOU BELIEVE THAT NOTHING IS DECIDED, THEN MOST LIKELY, NOTHING IS DECIDED.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
IT'S HOW A WORLD IS.
A WORLD IS INFINITELY LARGE, BUT ACTUALLY, IT'S PRETTY SMALL.

THE SCOPE OF WHAT YOU CAN SEE; THE SCOPE OF WHAT YOU CAN HEAR; THE SCOPE OF WHAT YOUR FINGERS CAN TOUCH; THE SCOPE OF WHAT YOU CAN FEEL... AND THAT'S ALL.
A WORLD...
...IT JUST IS! AND YOU MAKE IT.
?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.
THAT'S OKAY. FOR YOU ANYWAY.
GWII
YOU CAN TAKE AS MUCH TIME AS YOU LIKE TO MAKE YOUR OWN WORLD.


WELL?
にか
GRIN
DID YOU DISPLAY YOUR COURAGE?
ぐいっ
GWII
HUH?
THIS... WHAT WAS HER NAME? HIMAWARI-CHAN? DID YOU SHOW HER YOUR GOOD SIDE?
UH... I...
I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS A GOOD SIDE OR NOT, BUT I WALKED HER HOME.
このこの
NUDGE NUDGE
SHE APPRECIATED IT, RIGHT? YOU HUNK, YOU!
BUT IF IT WEREN'T FOR THIS HIMAWARI-CHAN, YOU MIGHT NEVER HAVE SEEN THE ACCIDENT.
HUH?

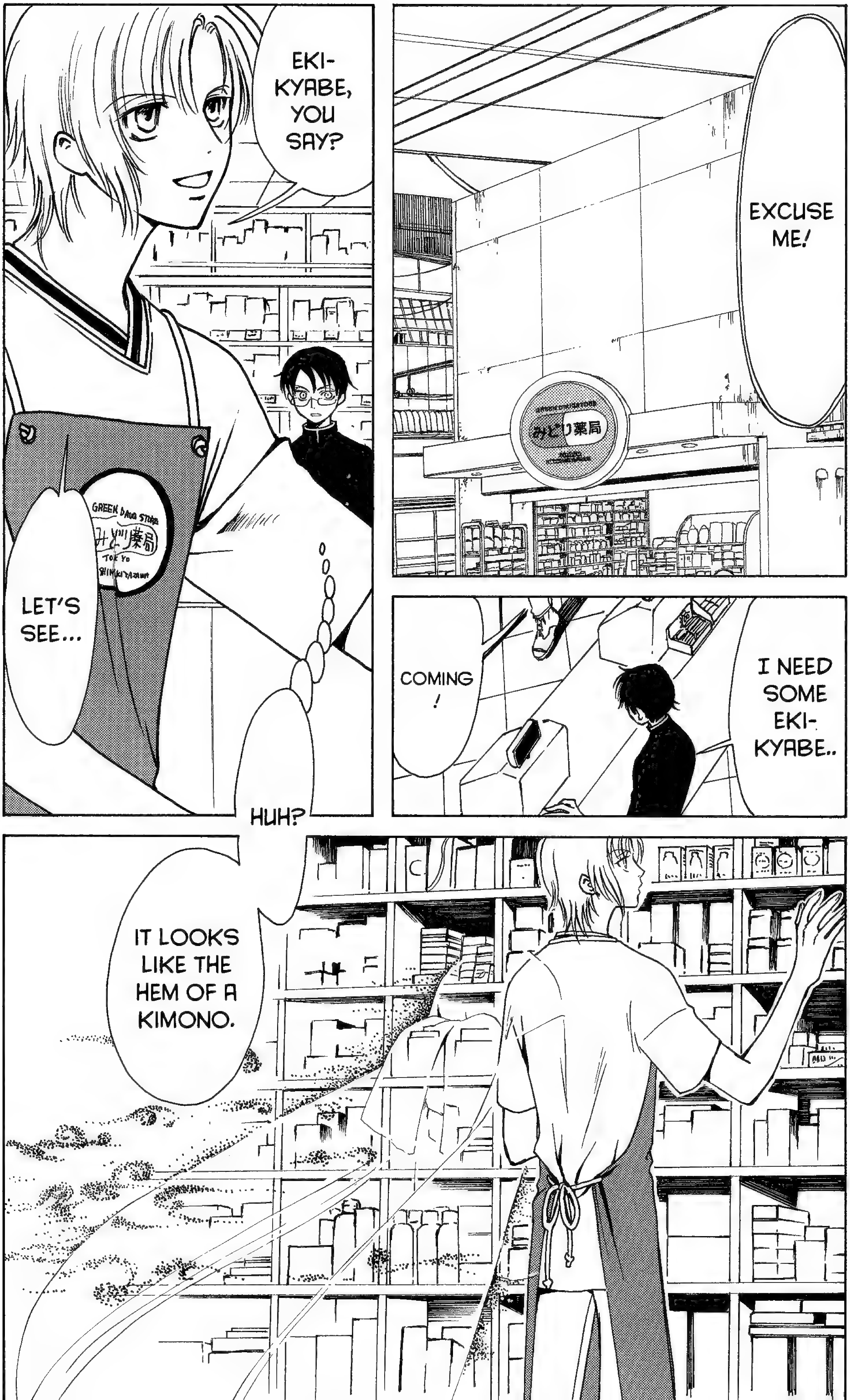

BUT NOW... ...I'M FEELING A LITTLE HUNGRY.
ぱん CLAP
ぱん CLAP
MAKE ME DINNER, OKAY? ♥
KLNCH
AM I SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR KITCHEN SLAVE?!
KITCHEN SLAVE! ♡
KITCHEN SLAVE! ♡
TWRL
TWRL
LISTEN, YOU...
ARE YOU ALWAYS GOING TO PLAY THE OUTSIDER?
FLAPPA
I AM AN OUTSIDER!
VSSH
I FIGURED SINCE WE'RE SO FRIENDLY, I'D JUST CALL YOU WATANUKI.
YOU'RE GETTING AWFULLY FAMILIAR!
それも名字かよ!!
AND YOU USE MY LAST NAME?


WATANUKI...
I'D LIKE TAICHAZUKE FOR DINNER.
TAICHAZUKE! ♡
TAICHAZUKE! ♡
OH!
AND FIN SAKE GOES WELL WITH IT!
AND DON'T FORGET TO CHAR THE FIN PROPERLY!
WIFF WIFF
TIE TIE
YOU *HAVE* SEA BREAM, RIGHT? YOU *HAVE* A FIN, RIGHT?
OH, COME ON!
WHY IS A JANITOR FORCED TO MAKE DINNER FOR EVERYONE ANYWAY?
HELPER! ♡
HELPER! ♡
TMP
TMP
TMP
I'M SO GLAD THAT I'VE FINALLY FOUND GOOD HELP.
SST
HE MAY COMPLAIN, BUT HE DOES GOOD WORK.
HE ALSO TAKES CARE OF MARU AND MORO FOR ME.
NOW CHAR THE FIN SLOWLY.
AAAHH!
LOOK AT THAT! IT'S BURNT!
BURNT! ♡
BURNT! ♡

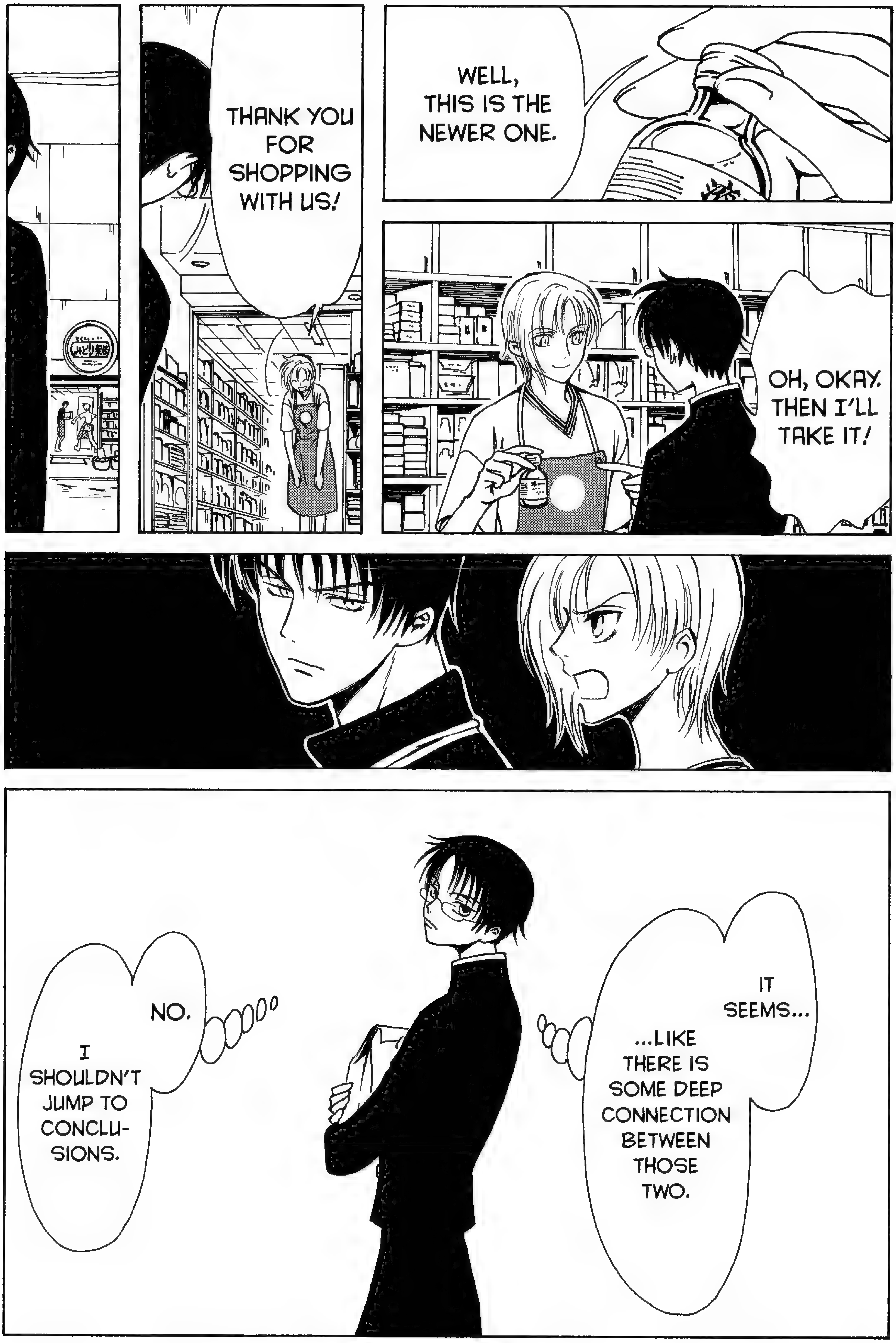

KA-CHAK
WHEN IT'S TIME FOR THESE TWO...
...I'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE MY PART-TIME HELP WITNESSES IT, TOO.
THE WORLD...
...IS A VERY SMALL PLACE, BUT...
PAAAAAAAA
...FOR THOSE WHO KNOW IT, IT IS VERY, VERY LARGE.

AND THE WORLD ...
...WHEN IT IS VIEWED BY THOSE WHO KNOW...
...IS FAR LARGER THAN JUST ONE WORLD CAN HOLD!

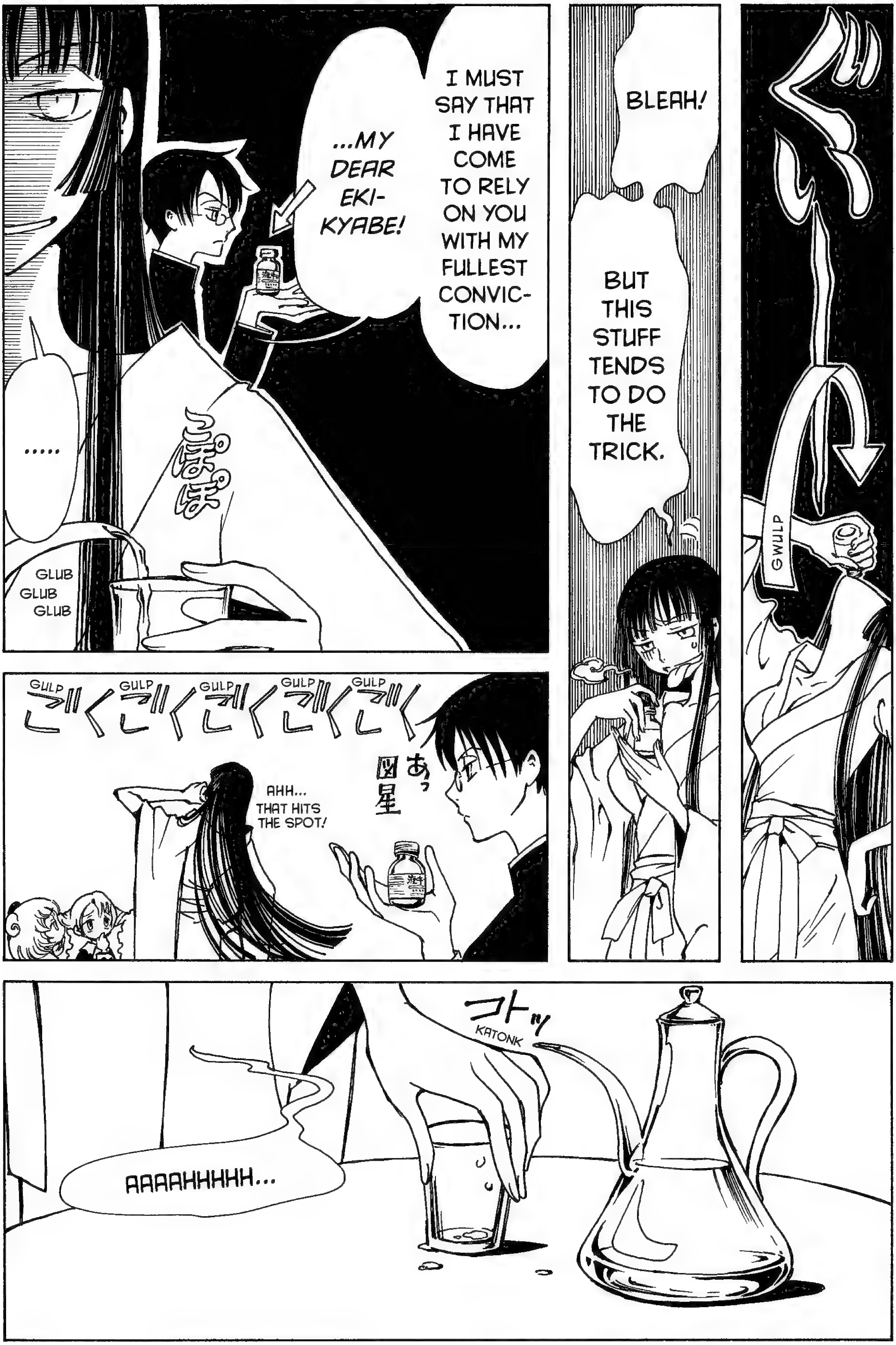
xxxHOLiC
～×××ホリック～

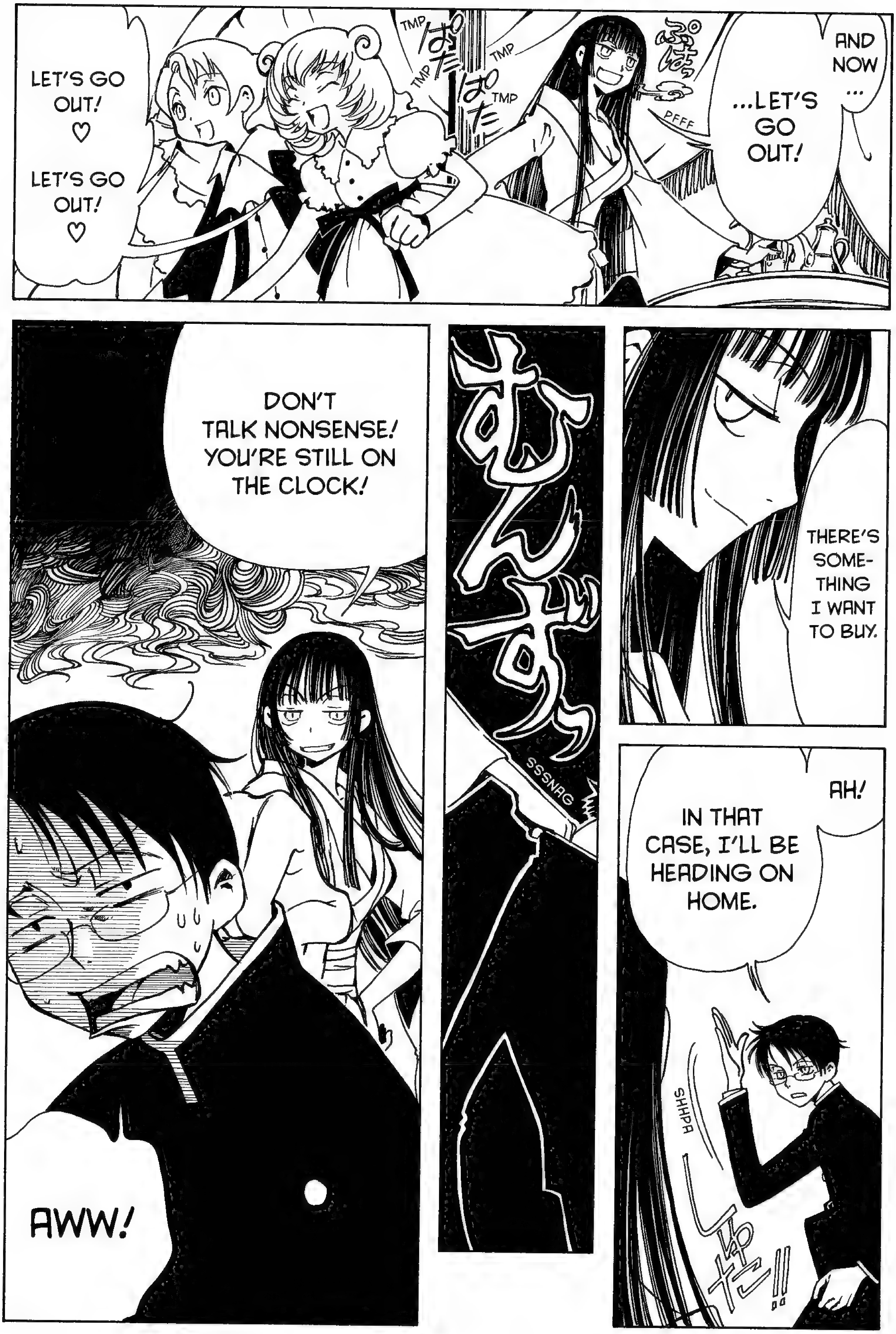

EXCUSE ME!
みどり薬局
I NEED SOME EKI-KYABE..
COMING!
EKI-KYABE, YOU SAY?
GREEN DRUG STORE
みどり薬局
TOKYO SHIMOKITAZAWA
LET'S SEE...
HUH?
IT LOOKS LIKE THE HEM OF A KIMONO.

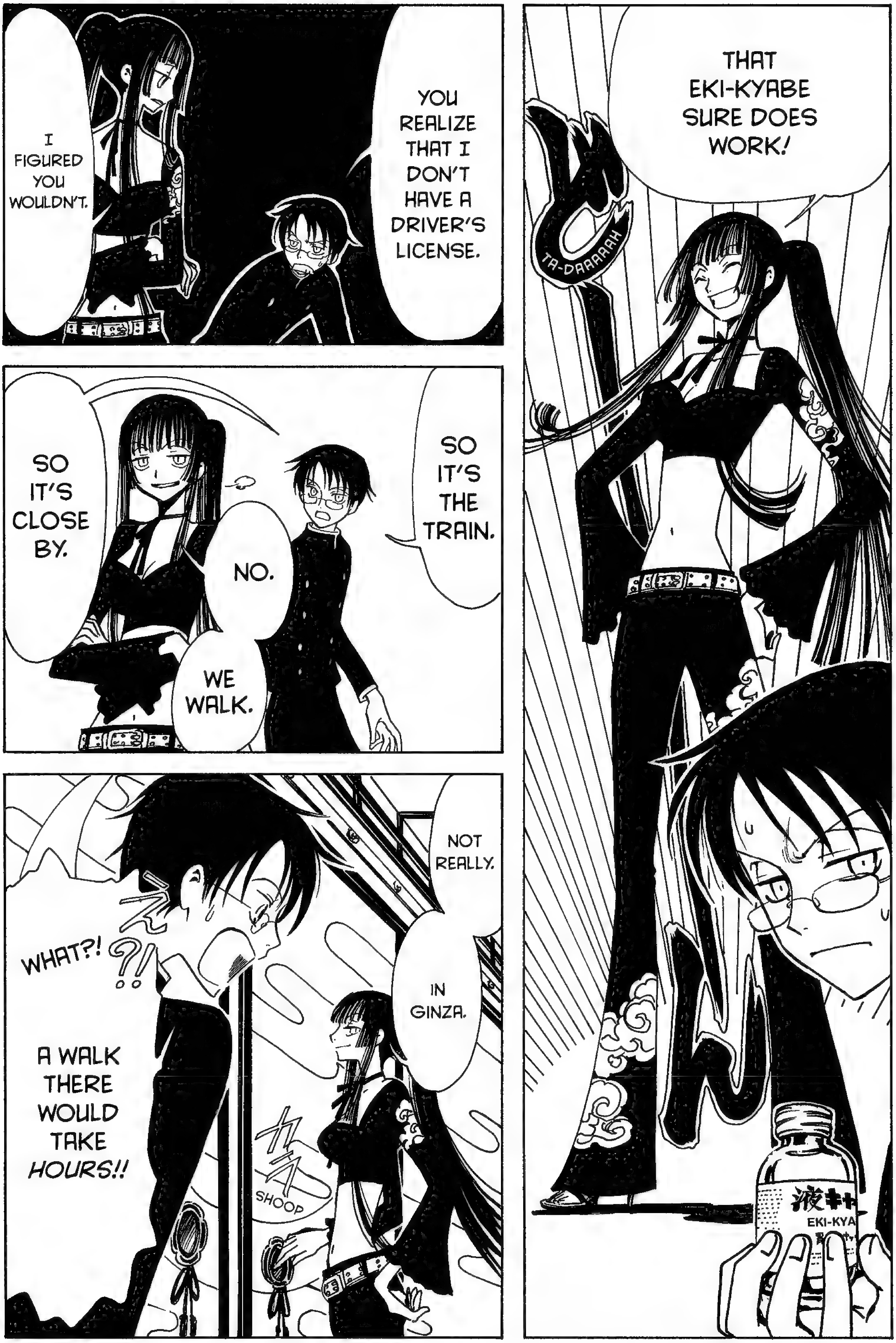
HEY, RIKUÔ! DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE EKI-KYABE IS?
WE HAVE TWO TYPES, REGULAR AND S-TYPE.
GREEN DRUG STORE
みどり薬局
TOKYO SHIMOKITAZAWA
WHICH DO YOU WANT?
にこっ
GRIN
UMM... WHICHEVER ONE WORKS BEST, I GUESS.
はっ
YUP
WHICH DO YOU THINK WORKS BETTER?
THE NEWER OF THE TWO, RIGHT?
THAT'S THE S-TYPE.
WHAT IS THAT?
IT'S LIKE SOMEONE OR SOMETHING HAS ATTACHED ITSELF TO THOSE TWO.

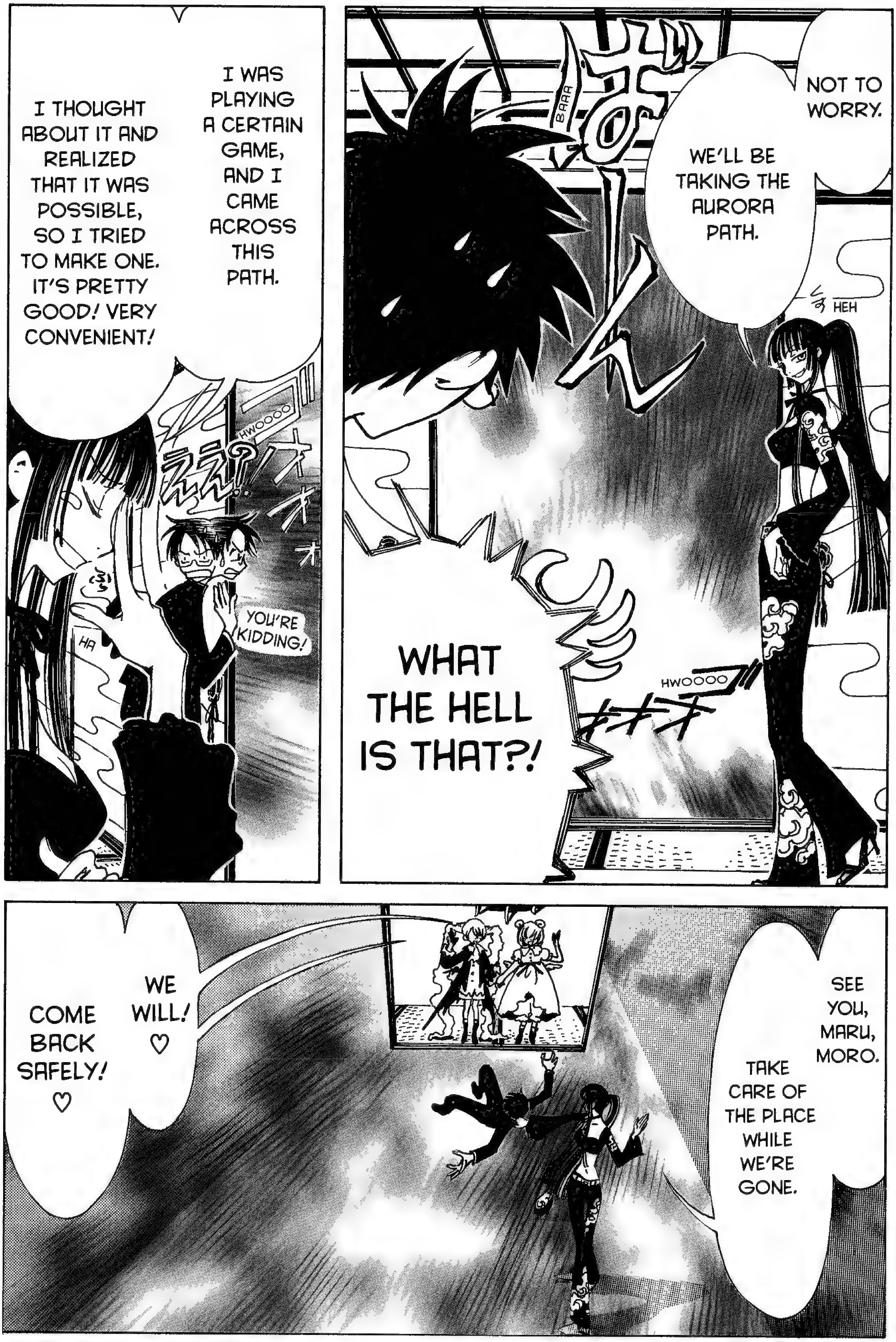

WELL, THIS IS THE NEWER ONE.
OH, OKAY. THEN I'LL TAKE IT!
THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING WITH US!
IT SEEMS... ...LIKE THERE IS SOME DEEP CONNECTION BETWEEN THOSE TWO.
NO. I SHOULDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.

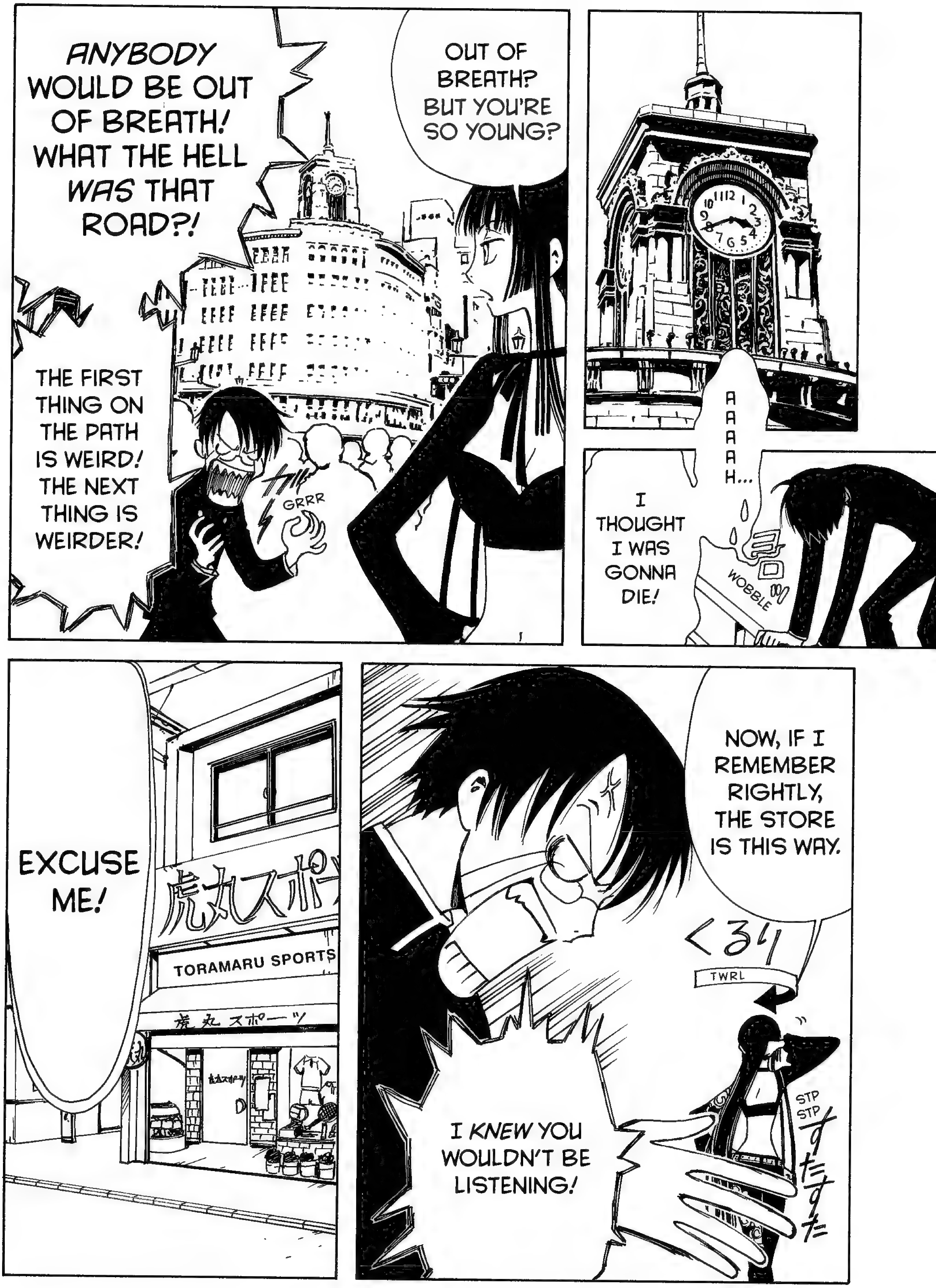
VWOOSH
I'M BACK!
WILL YOU KEEP YOUR VOICE *DOWN*, WATANUKI?
DOOOM
HAVE YOU NO SYMPATHY FOR THE ENFEEBLED, YOU COLD-HEARTED LITTLE...
IT'S JUST A HANGOVER, ISN'T IT?
YOU GET NO SYMPATHY FOR THAT!
POPP
HERE YOU GO.

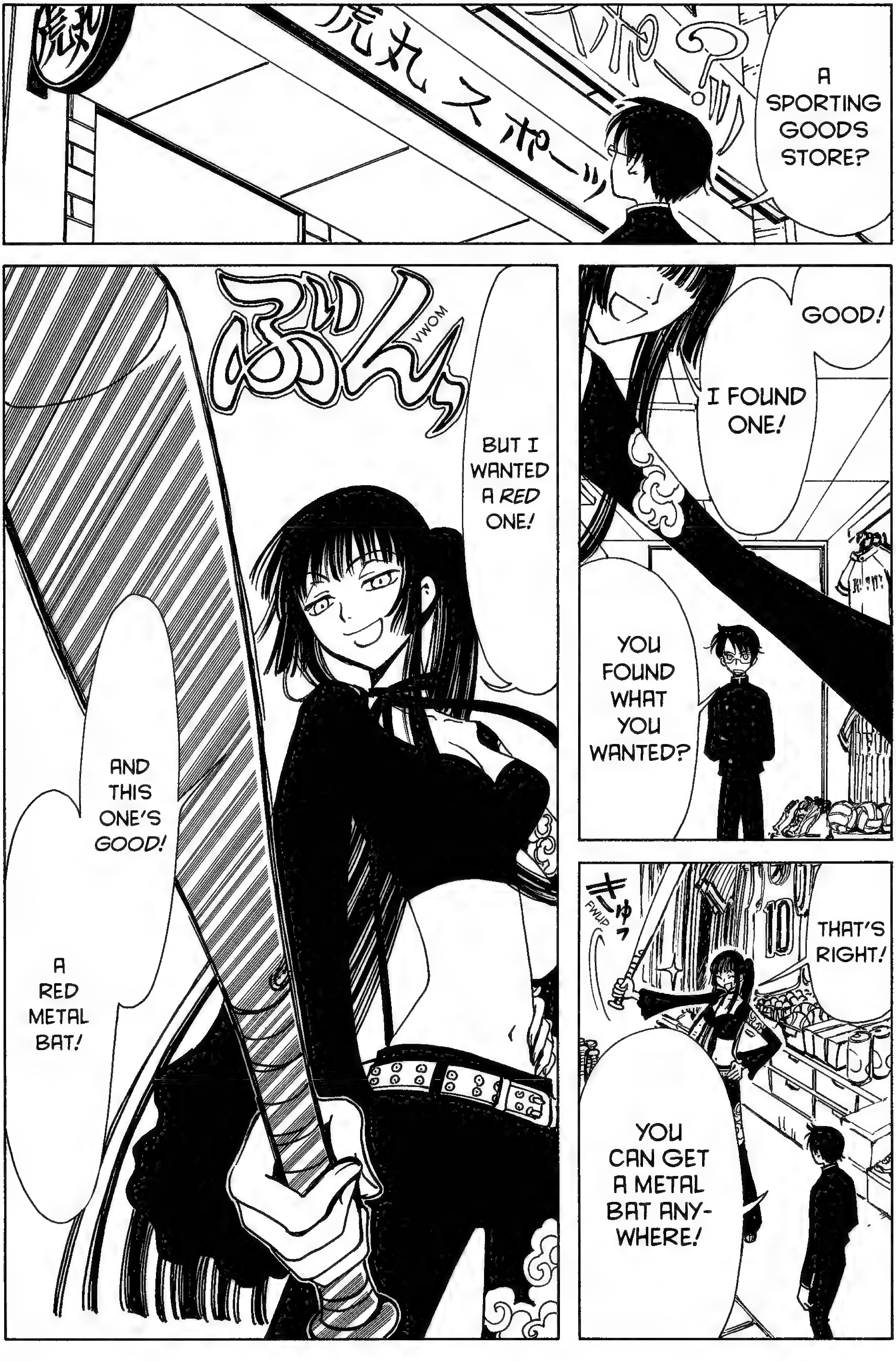

GWULP
BLEAH!
BUT THIS STUFF TENDS TO DO THE TRICK.
I MUST SAY THAT I HAVE COME TO RELY ON YOU WITH MY FULLEST CONVICTION...
...MY DEAR EKI-KYABE!
こぽぽ
.....
GLUB GLUB GLUB
ごくごくごくごくごく
GULP GULP GULP GULP GULP
あっ図星
AHH... THAT HITS THE SPOT!
コトッ
KATONK
AAAAHHHHH...

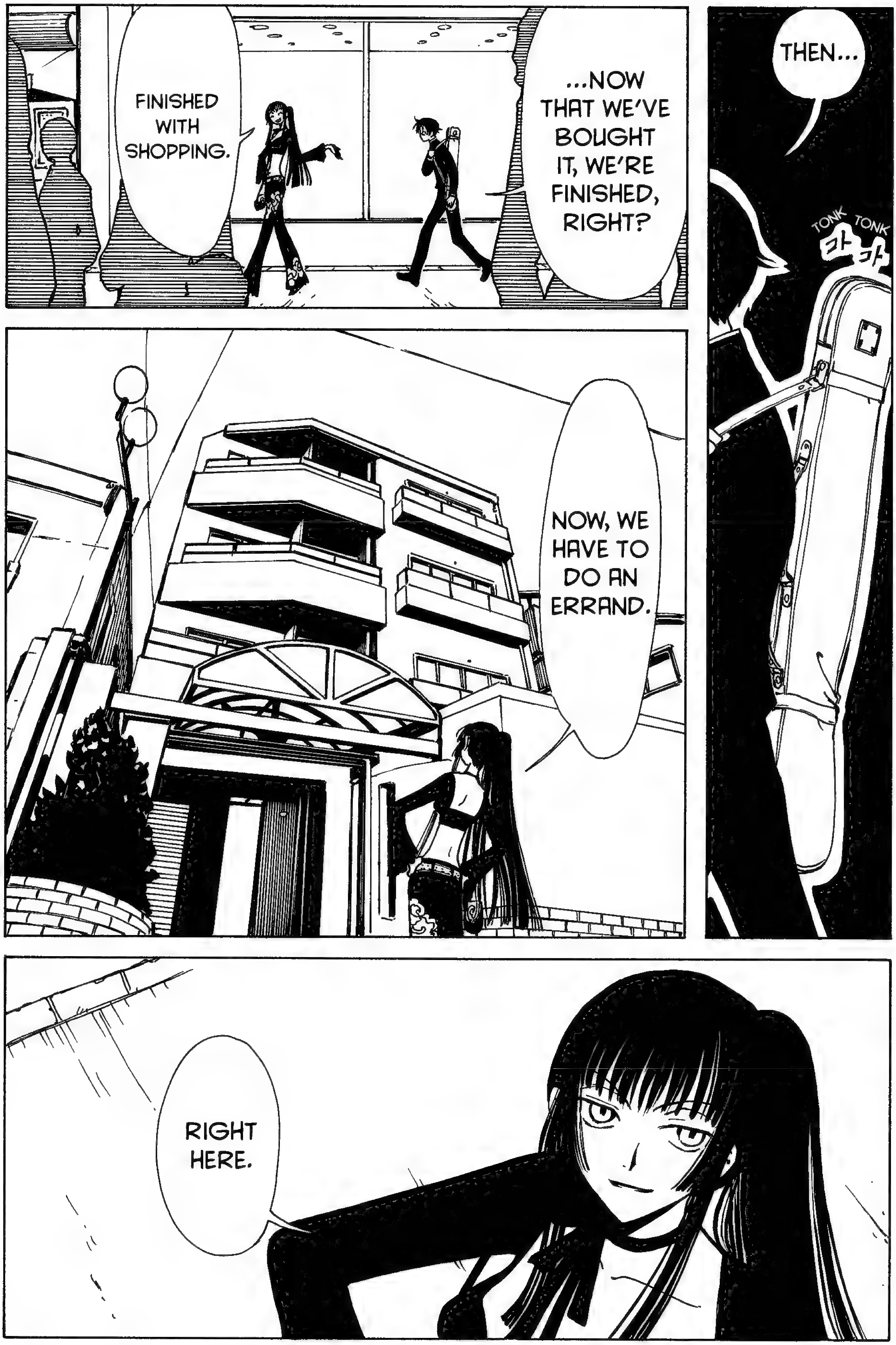

AND NOW...
...LET'S GO OUT!
ぷはっ
PFFF
ぱた ぱた
TMP TMP TMP TMP
LET'S GO OUT! ♡
LET'S GO OUT! ♡
THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO BUY.
AH!
IN THAT CASE, I'LL BE HEADING ON HOME.
しゅたっ!!
SHPA
むんずっ
SSSNAG
DON'T TALK NONSENSE! YOU'RE STILL ON THE CLOCK!
AWW!

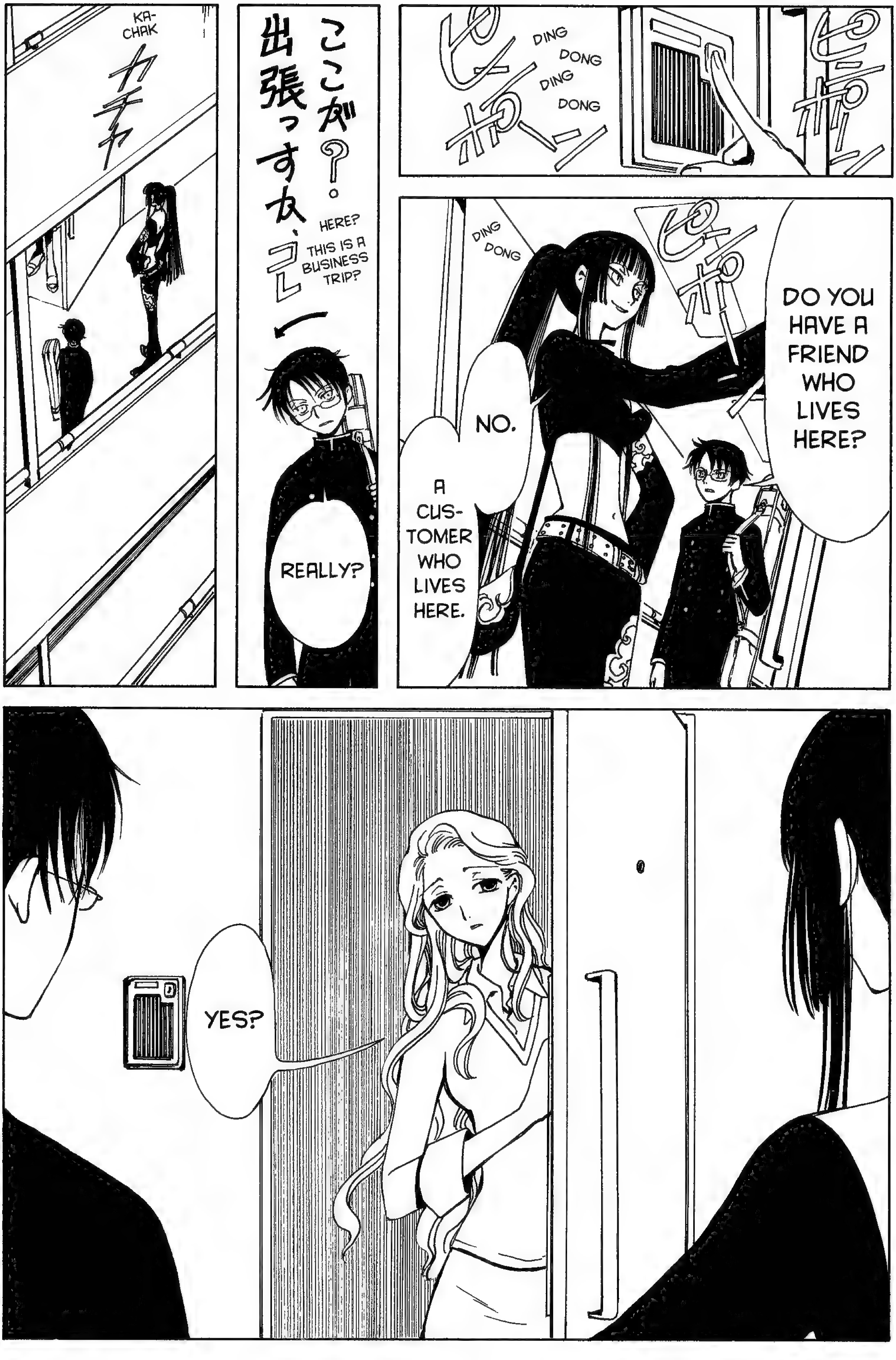

THAT EKI-KYABE SURE DOES WORK!
TA-DARAAAH
EKI-KYA
YOU REALIZE THAT I DON'T HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE.
I FIGURED YOU WOULDN'T.
SO IT'S THE TRAIN.
NO.
SO IT'S CLOSE BY.
WE WALK.
NOT REALLY.
IN GINZA.
WHAT?!
A WALK THERE WOULD TAKE *HOURS!!*
SHOOP

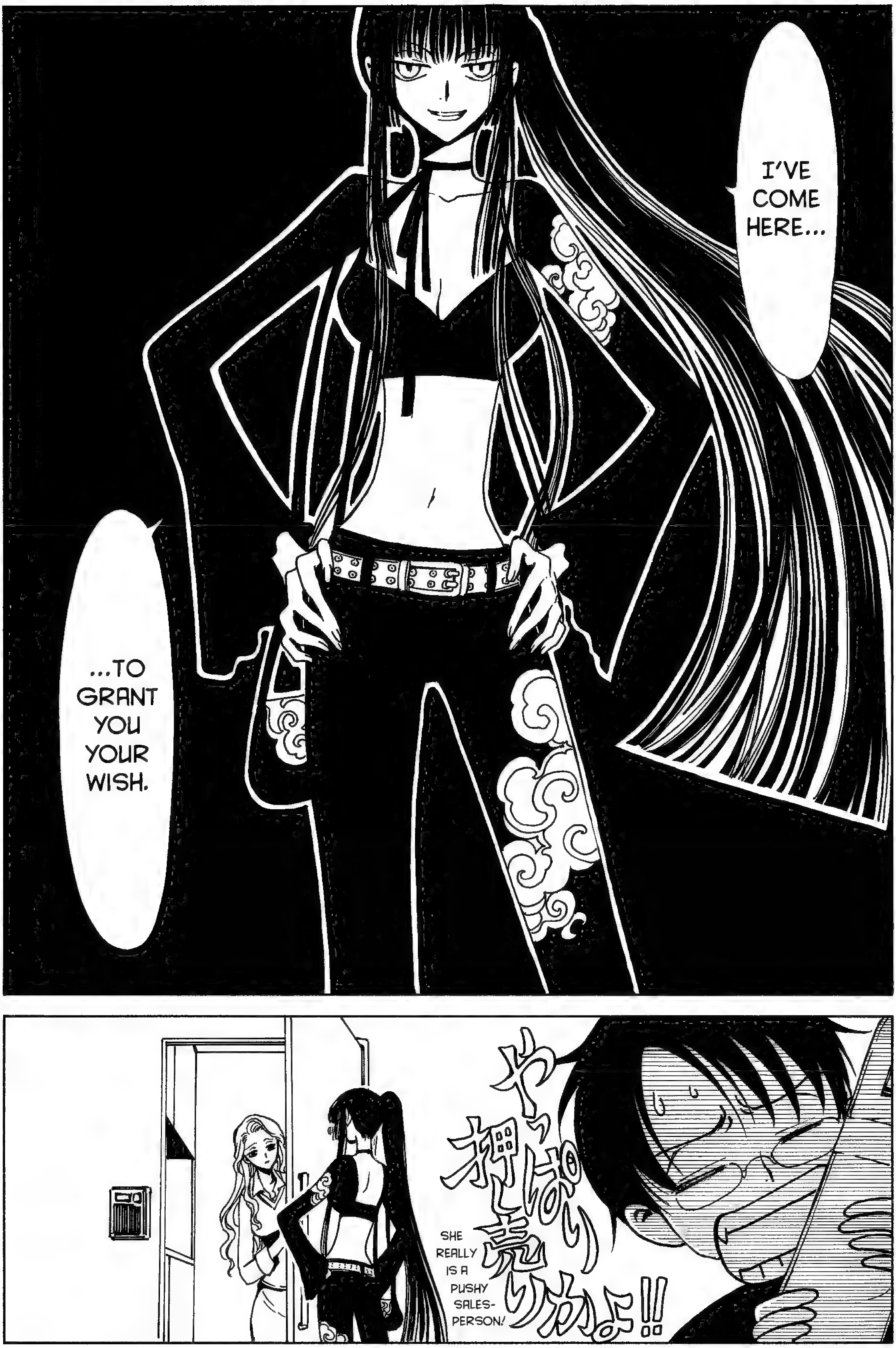

NOT TO WORRY.
WE'LL BE TAKING THE AURORA PATH.
BAAA
HEH
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!
HWOOOO
I WAS PLAYING A CERTAIN GAME, AND I CAME ACROSS THIS PATH.
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT AND REALIZED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE, SO I TRIED TO MAKE ONE. IT'S PRETTY GOOD! VERY CONVENIENT!
HWOOOO
YOU'RE KIDDING!
HA
SEE YOU, MARU, MORO.
TAKE CARE OF THE PLACE WHILE WE'RE GONE.
WE WILL! ♡
COME BACK SAFELY! ♡


AAAAH...
I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA DIE!
WOBBLE
OUT OF BREATH? BUT YOU'RE SO YOUNG?
ANYBODY WOULD BE OUT OF BREATH! WHAT THE HELL *WAS* THAT ROAD?!
THE FIRST THING ON THE PATH IS WEIRD! THE NEXT THING IS WEIRDER!
GRRR
NOW, IF I REMEMBER RIGHTLY, THE STORE IS THIS WAY.
くるり
TWRL
STP STP
すたすた
I *KNEW* YOU WOULDN'T BE LISTENING!
EXCUSE ME!
虎丸スポー
TORAMARU SPORTS
虎丸スポーツ

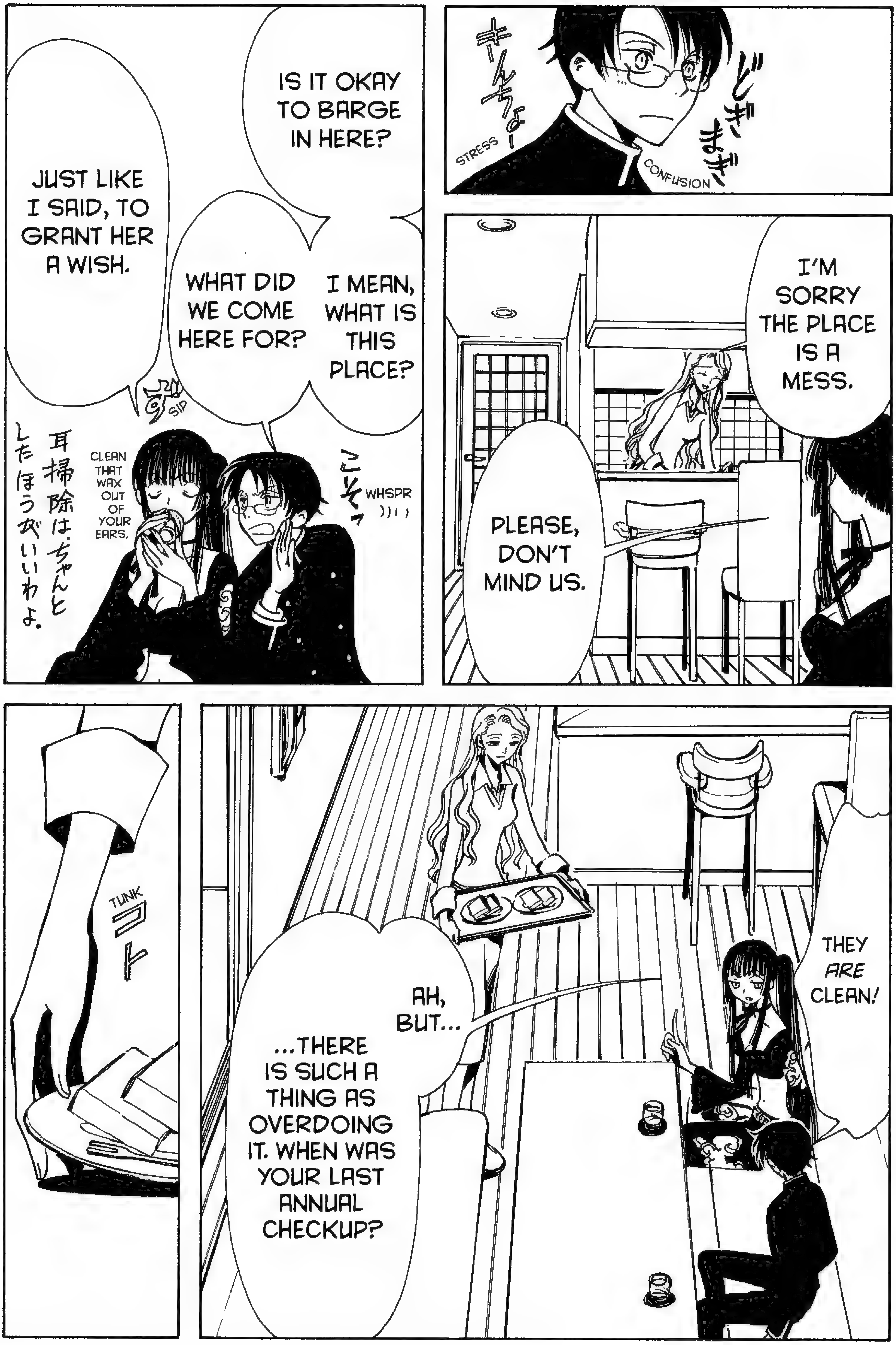

虎丸
虎丸スポーツ
A SPORTING GOODS STORE?
GOOD!
I FOUND ONE!
YOU FOUND WHAT YOU WANTED?
きゅっ
FWUP
10
THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU CAN GET A METAL BAT ANYWHERE!
ぶりん
VWOM
BUT I WANTED A *RED* ONE!
AND THIS ONE'S *GOOD!*
A RED METAL BAT!

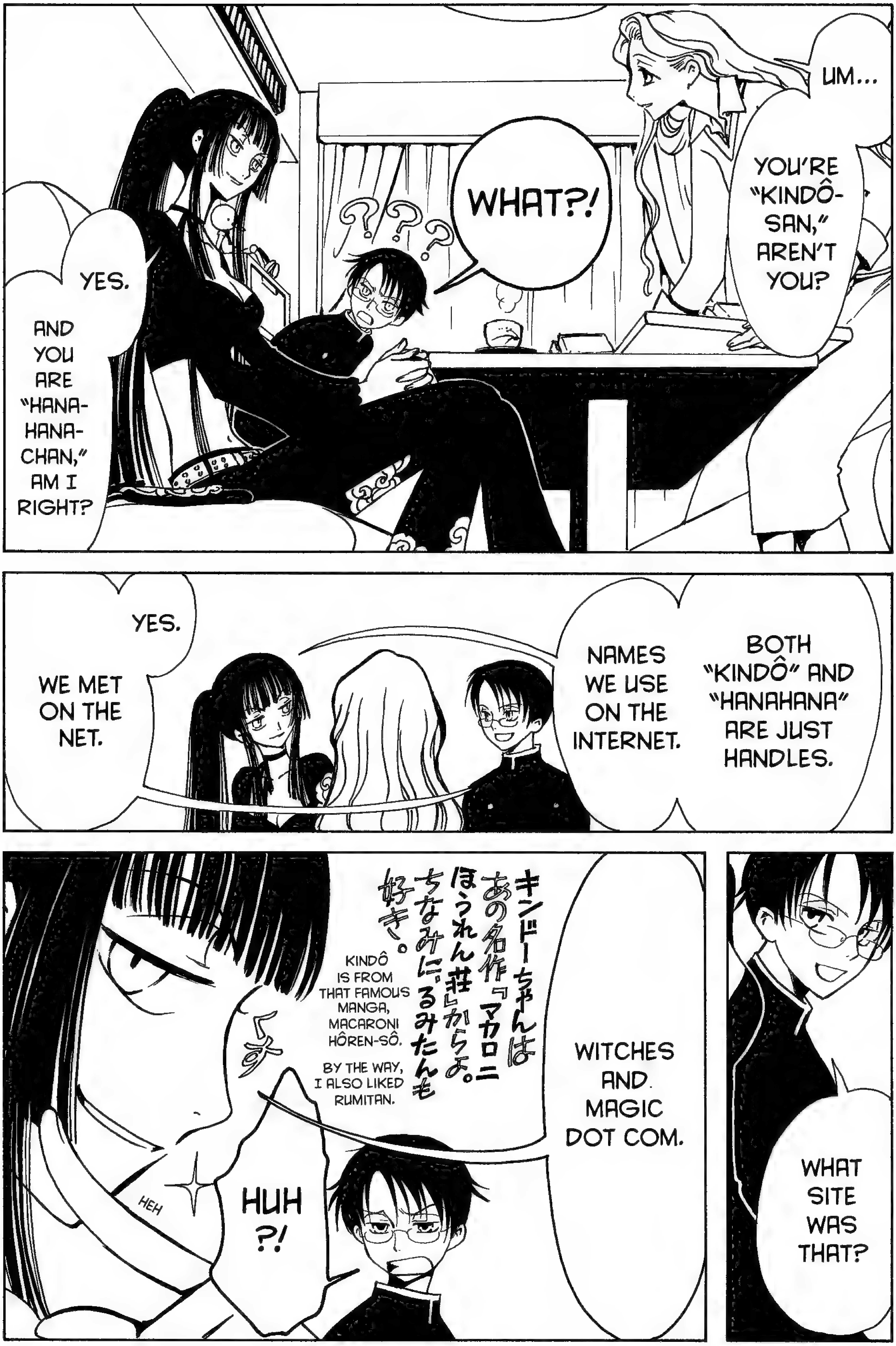

THEN...
TONK TONK
...NOW THAT WE'VE BOUGHT IT, WE'RE FINISHED, RIGHT?
FINISHED WITH SHOPPING.
NOW, WE HAVE TO DO AN ERRAND.
RIGHT HERE.

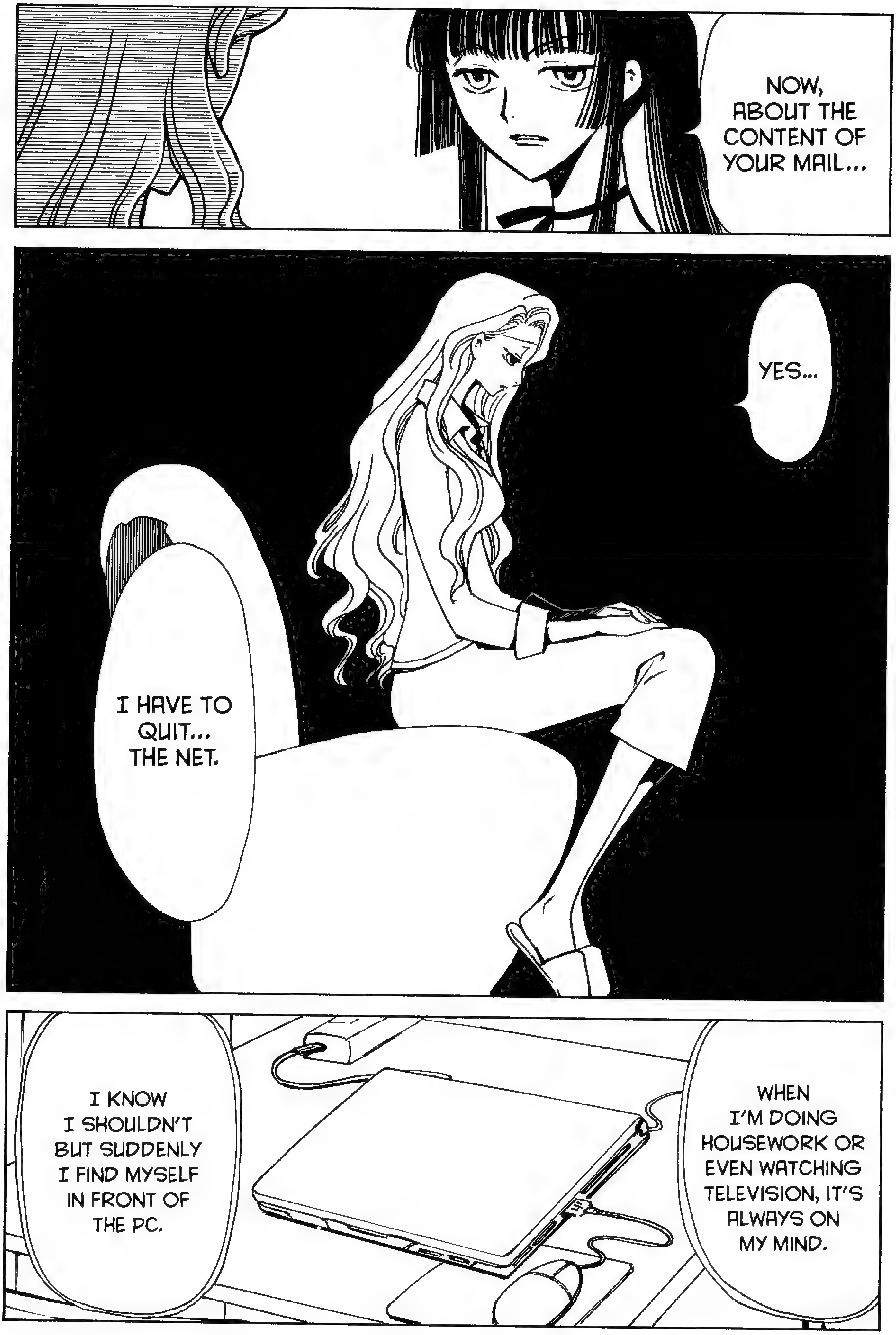

ピンポーン
DING DONG DING DONG
ピンポーン
ピンポ
DING DONG
DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO LIVES HERE?
NO.
A CUSTOMER WHO LIVES HERE.
ここが？。出張っすか、コレ
HERE? THIS IS A BUSINESS TRIP?
REALLY?
カチャ
KA-CHAK
YES?

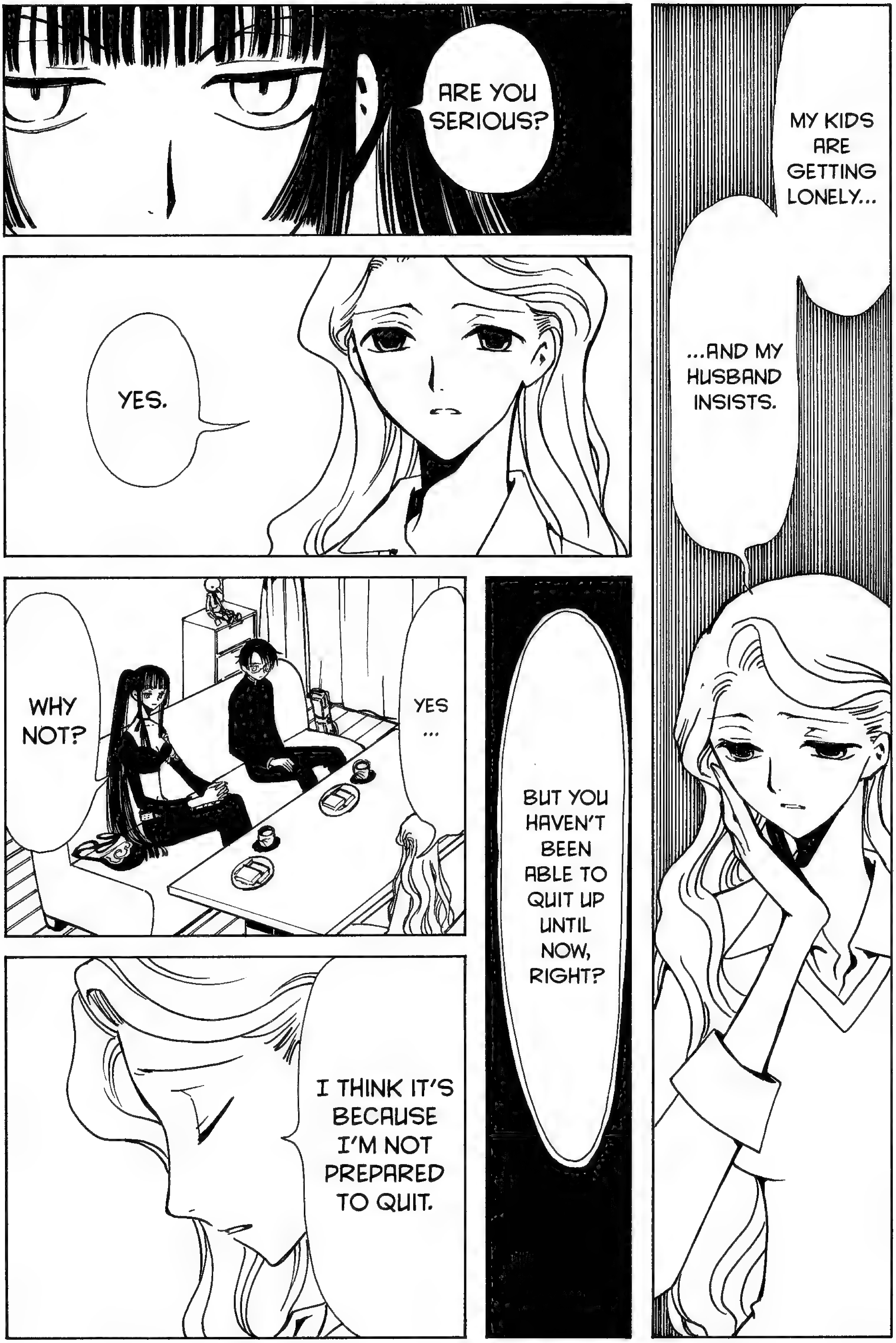

I'VE COME HERE...
...TO GRANT YOU YOUR WISH.
やっぱり押し売りかよ!!
SHE REALLY IS A PUSHY SALES-PERSON!

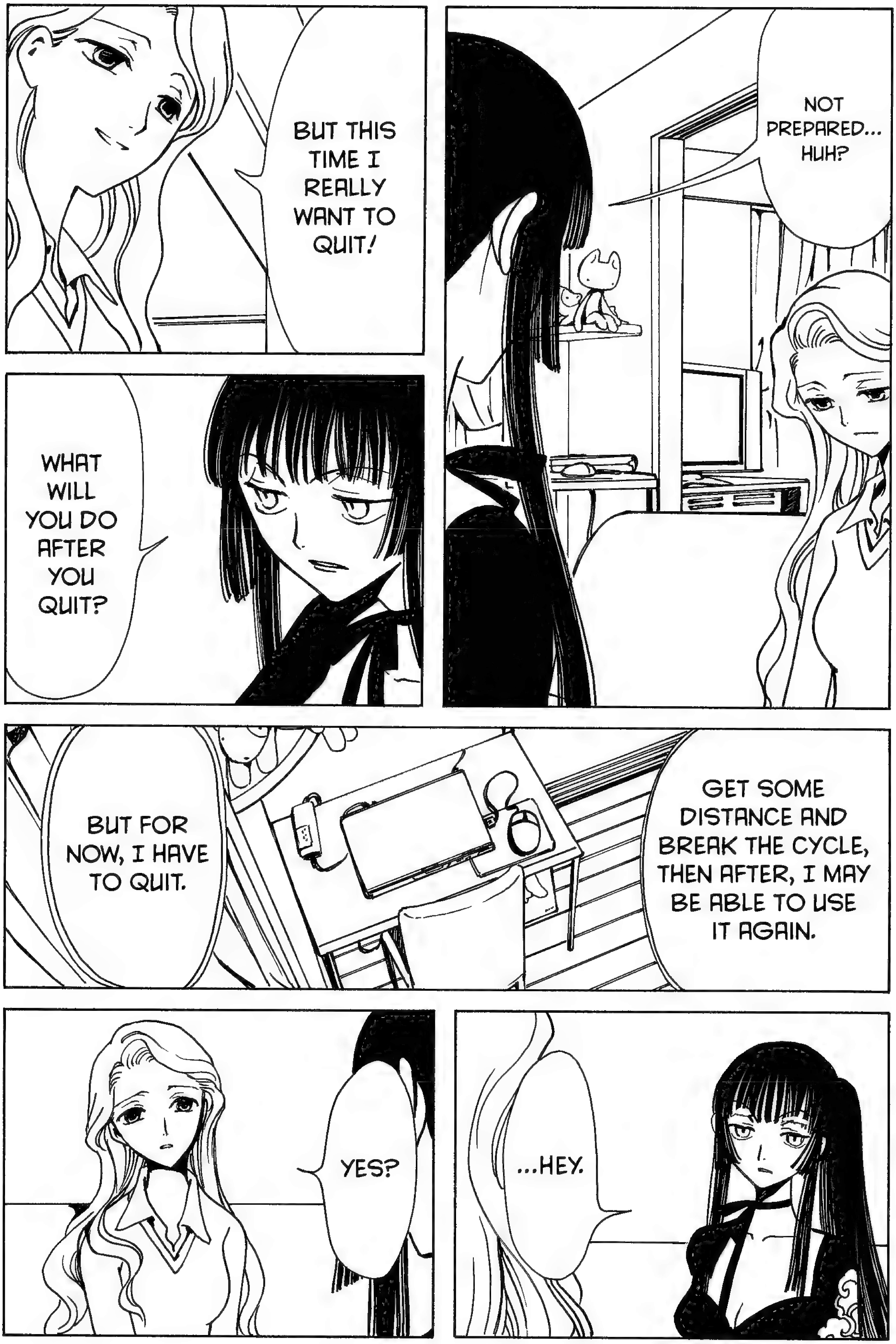
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

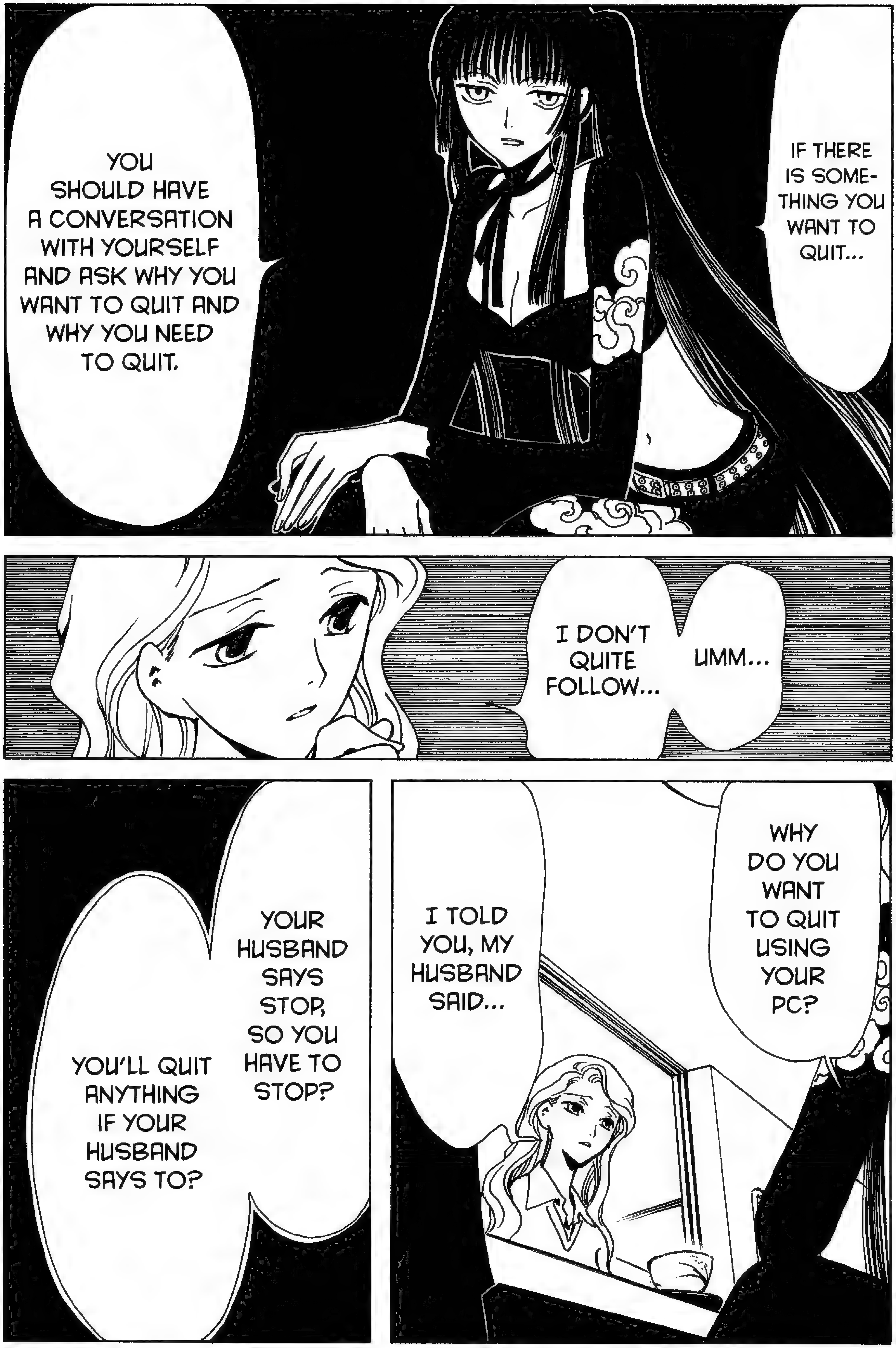

きんちょー
STRESS
どぎまぎ
CONFUSION
I'M SORRY THE PLACE IS A MESS.
PLEASE, DON'T MIND US.
IS IT OKAY TO BARGE IN HERE?
I MEAN, WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
WHAT DID WE COME HERE FOR?
こそっ
WHSPR
JUST LIKE I SAID, TO GRANT HER A WISH.
ず
SIP
耳掃除はちゃんとしたほうがいいわよ。
CLEAN THAT WAX OUT OF YOUR EARS.
THEY *ARE* CLEAN!
AH, BUT...
...THERE IS SUCH A THING AS OVERDOING IT. WHEN WAS YOUR LAST ANNUAL CHECKUP?
コト
TUNK

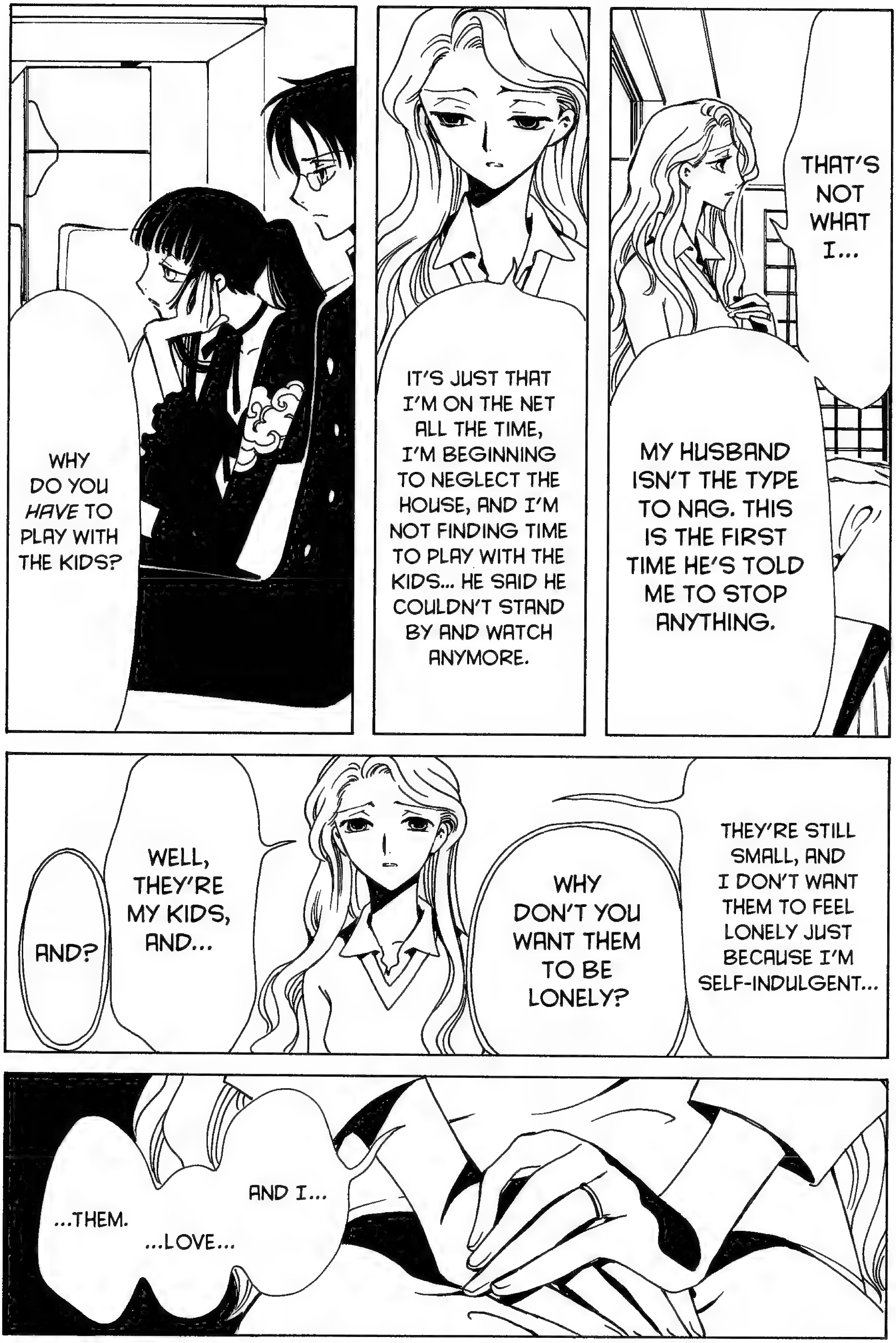

UM... YOU'RE "KINDÔ-SAN," AREN'T YOU?
WHAT?!
???
YES. AND YOU ARE "HANA-HANA-CHAN," AM I RIGHT?
BOTH "KINDÔ" AND "HANAHANA" ARE JUST HANDLES.
NAMES WE USE ON THE INTERNET.
YES. WE MET ON THE NET.
WHAT SITE WAS THAT?
WITCHES AND. MAGIC DOT COM.
キンドーちゃんはあの名作『マカロニほうれん荘』からよ。ちなみにるみたんも好き。
KINDÔ IS FROM THAT FAMOUS MANGA, MACARONI HÔREN-SÔ. BY THE WAY, I ALSO LIKED RUMITAN.
くす
HEH
HUH?!

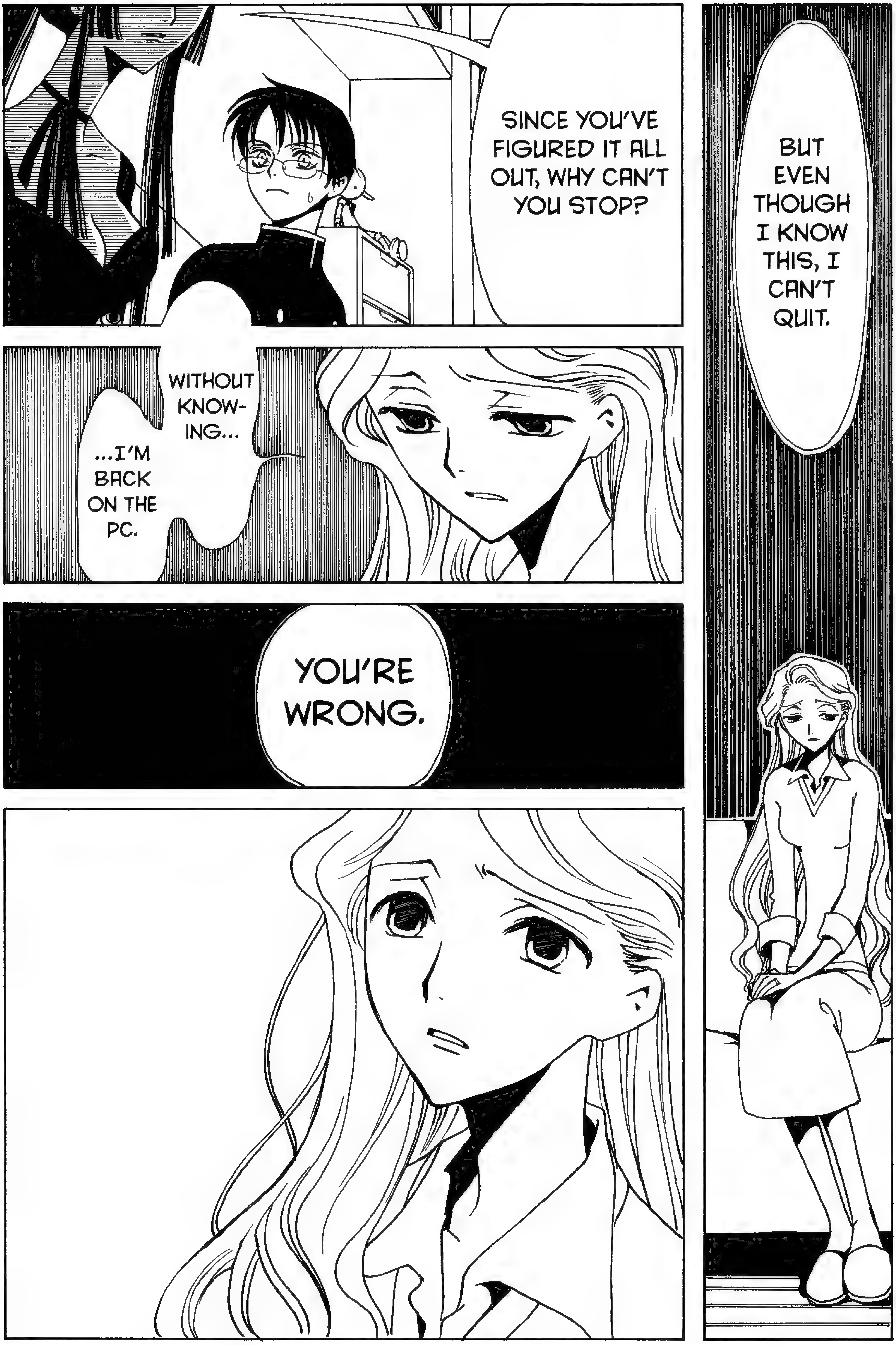

NOW, ABOUT THE CONTENT OF YOUR MAIL...
YES...
I HAVE TO QUIT... THE NET.
WHEN I'M DOING HOUSEWORK OR EVEN WATCHING TELEVISION, IT'S ALWAYS ON MY MIND.
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BUT SUDDENLY I FIND MYSELF IN FRONT OF THE PC.

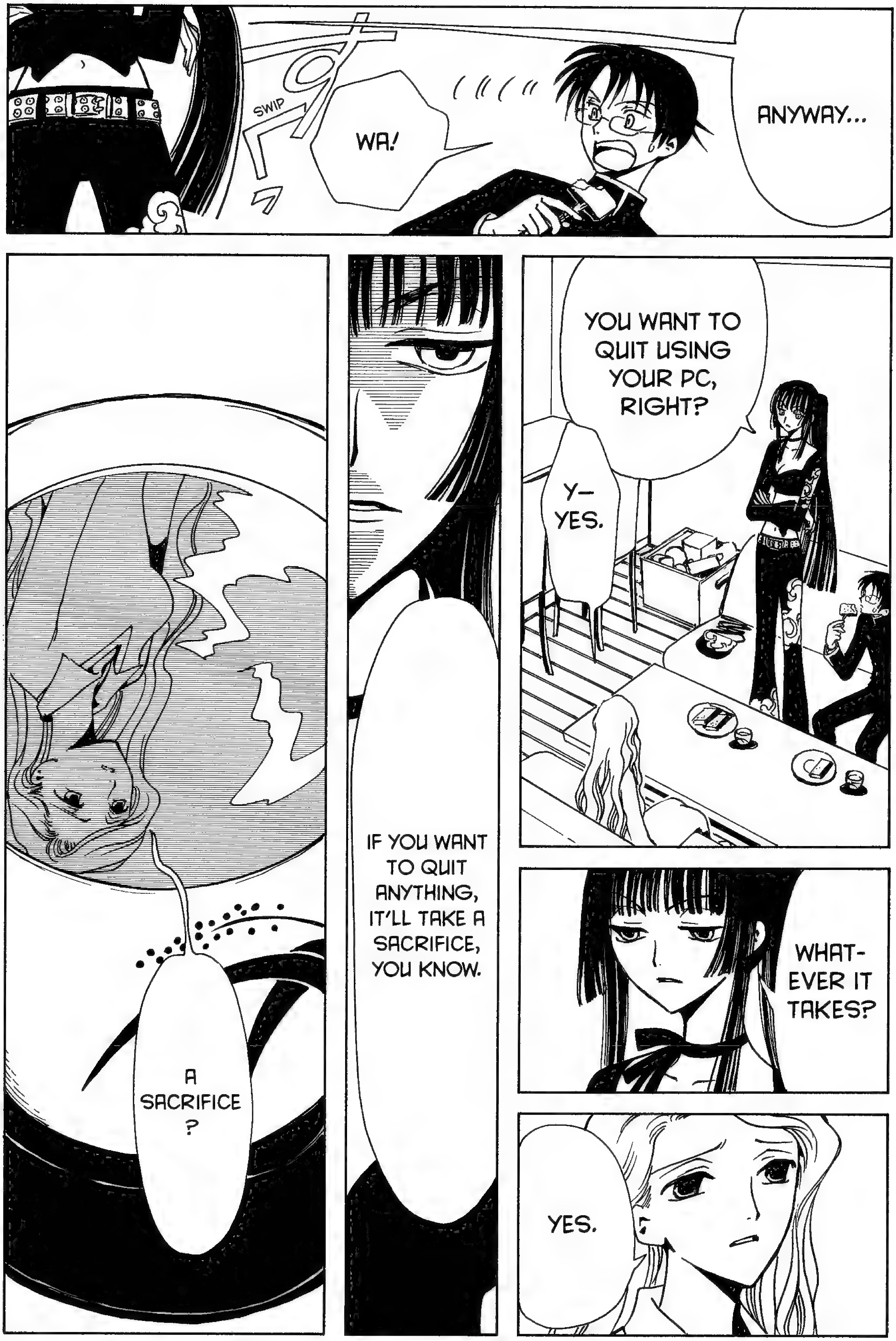

MY KIDS ARE GETTING LONELY...
...AND MY HUSBAND INSISTS.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YES.
BUT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO QUIT UP UNTIL NOW, RIGHT?
YES ...
WHY NOT?
I THINK IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT PREPARED TO QUIT.

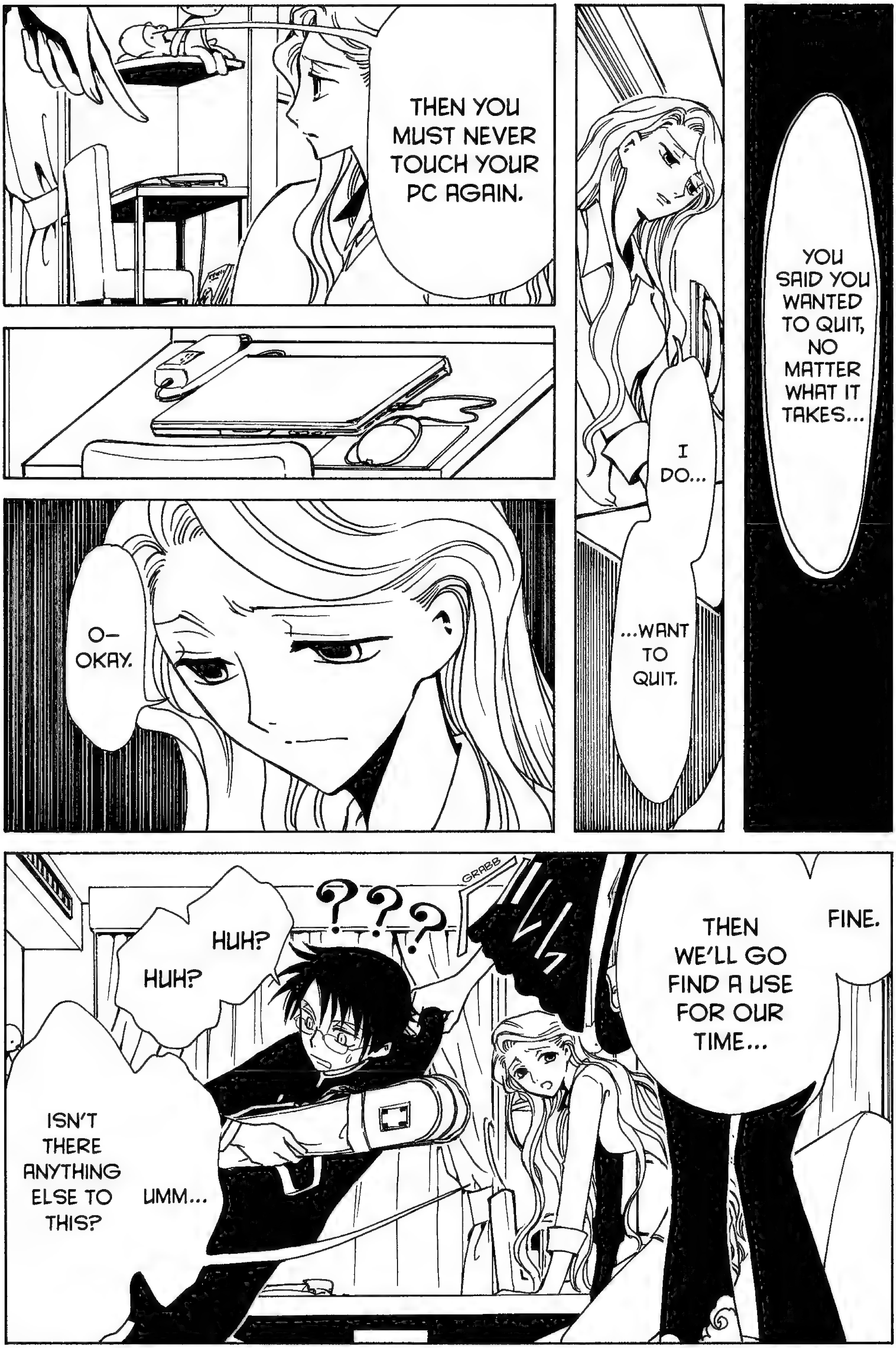

NOT PREPARED... HUH?
BUT THIS TIME I REALLY WANT TO QUIT!
WHAT WILL YOU DO AFTER YOU QUIT?
GET SOME DISTANCE AND BREAK THE CYCLE, THEN AFTER, I MAY BE ABLE TO USE IT AGAIN.
BUT FOR NOW, I HAVE TO QUIT.
...HEY.
YES?

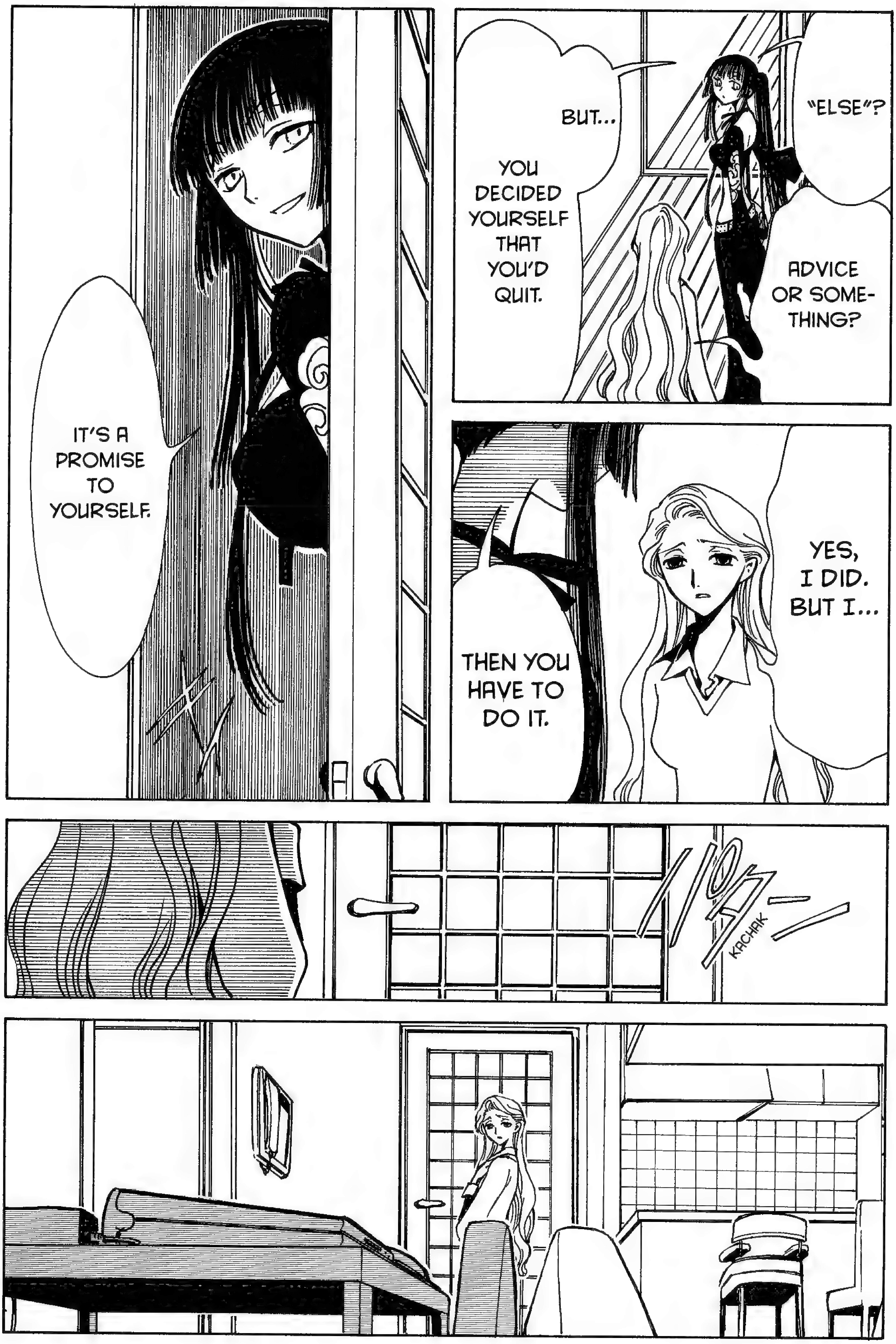

IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WANT TO QUIT...
YOU SHOULD HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH YOURSELF AND ASK WHY YOU WANT TO QUIT AND WHY YOU NEED TO QUIT.
UMM...
I DON'T QUITE FOLLOW...
WHY DO YOU WANT TO QUIT USING YOUR PC?
I TOLD YOU, MY HUSBAND SAID...
YOUR HUSBAND SAYS STOP, SO YOU HAVE TO STOP?
YOU'LL QUIT ANYTHING IF YOUR HUSBAND SAYS TO?

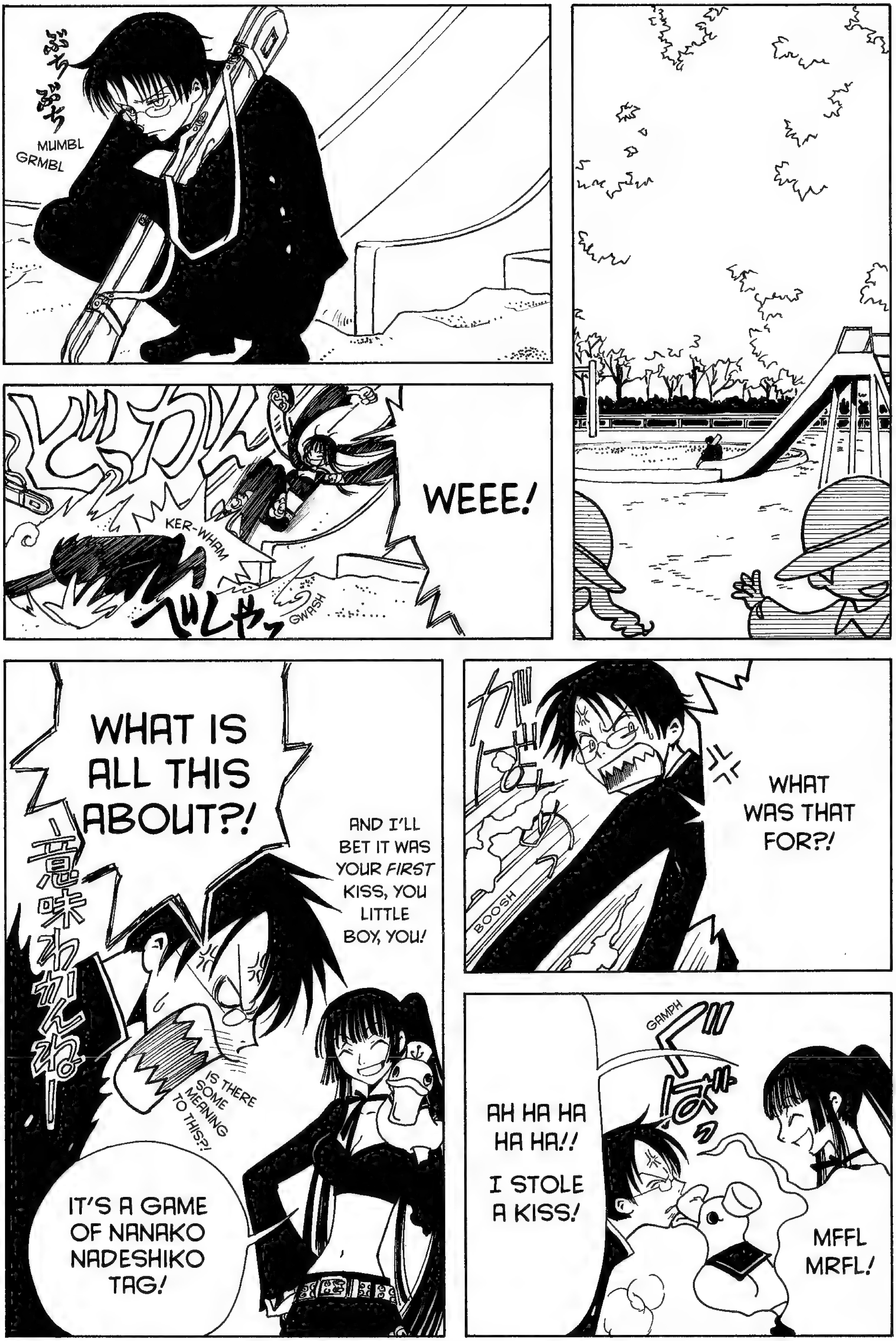

THAT'S NOT WHAT I...
MY HUSBAND ISN'T THE TYPE TO NAG. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE'S TOLD ME TO STOP ANYTHING.
IT'S JUST THAT I'M ON THE NET ALL THE TIME, I'M BEGINNING TO NEGLECT THE HOUSE, AND I'M NOT FINDING TIME TO PLAY WITH THE KIDS... HE SAID HE COULDN'T STAND BY AND WATCH ANYMORE.
WHY DO YOU *HAVE* TO PLAY WITH THE KIDS?
THEY'RE STILL SMALL, AND I DON'T WANT THEM TO FEEL LONELY JUST BECAUSE I'M SELF-INDULGENT...
WHY DON'T YOU WANT THEM TO BE LONELY?
WELL, THEY'RE MY KIDS, AND...
AND?
AND I...
...LOVE...
...THEM.

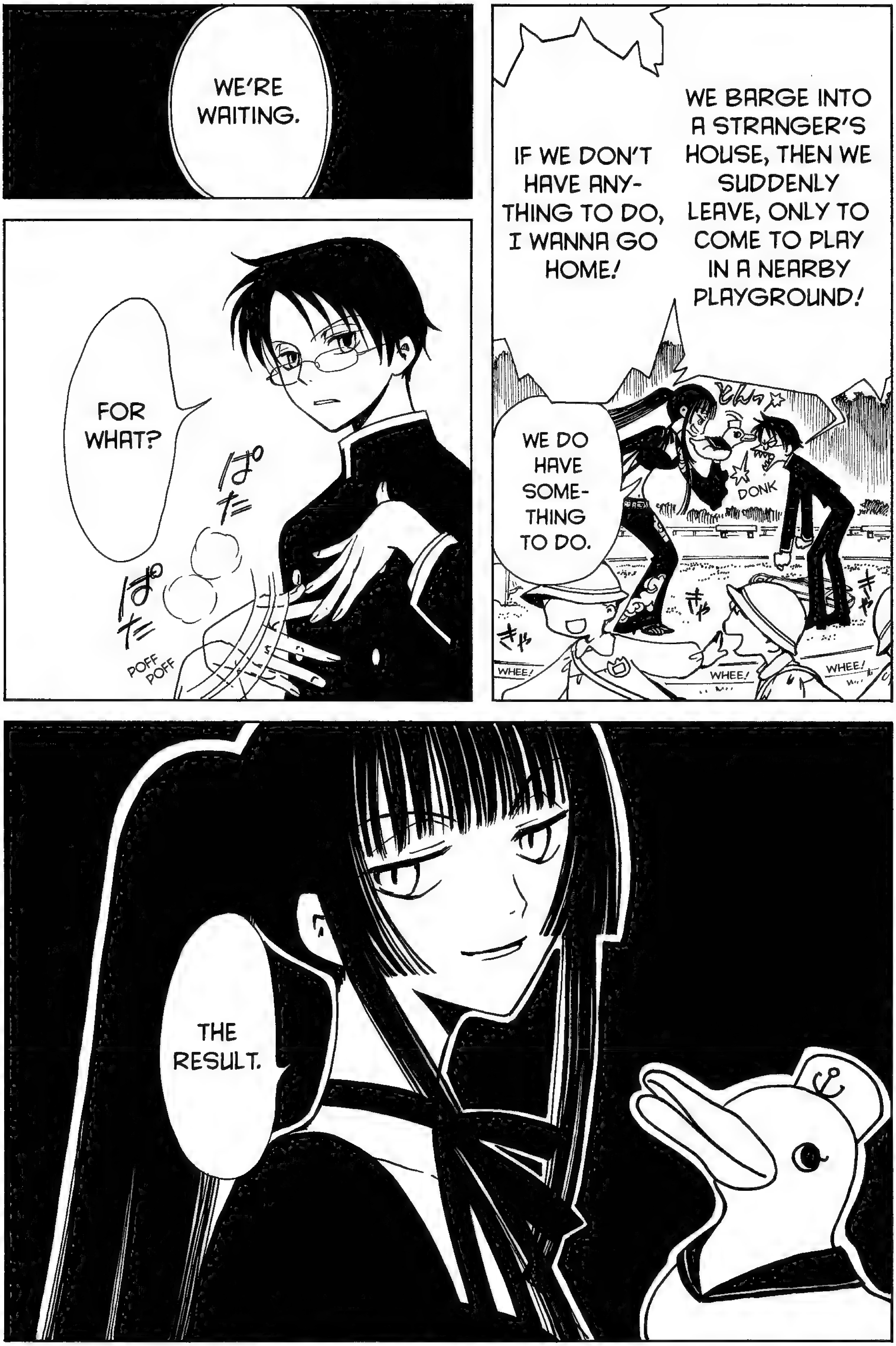

BUT EVEN THOUGH I KNOW THIS, I CAN'T QUIT.
SINCE YOU'VE FIGURED IT ALL OUT, WHY CAN'T YOU STOP?
WITHOUT KNOWING...
...I'M BACK ON THE PC.
YOU'RE WRONG.


ANYWAY...
WA!
SWIP
YOU WANT TO QUIT USING YOUR PC, RIGHT?
Y— YES.
IF YOU WANT TO QUIT ANYTHING, IT'LL TAKE A SACRIFICE, YOU KNOW.
A SACRIFICE?
WHAT-EVER IT TAKES?
YES.

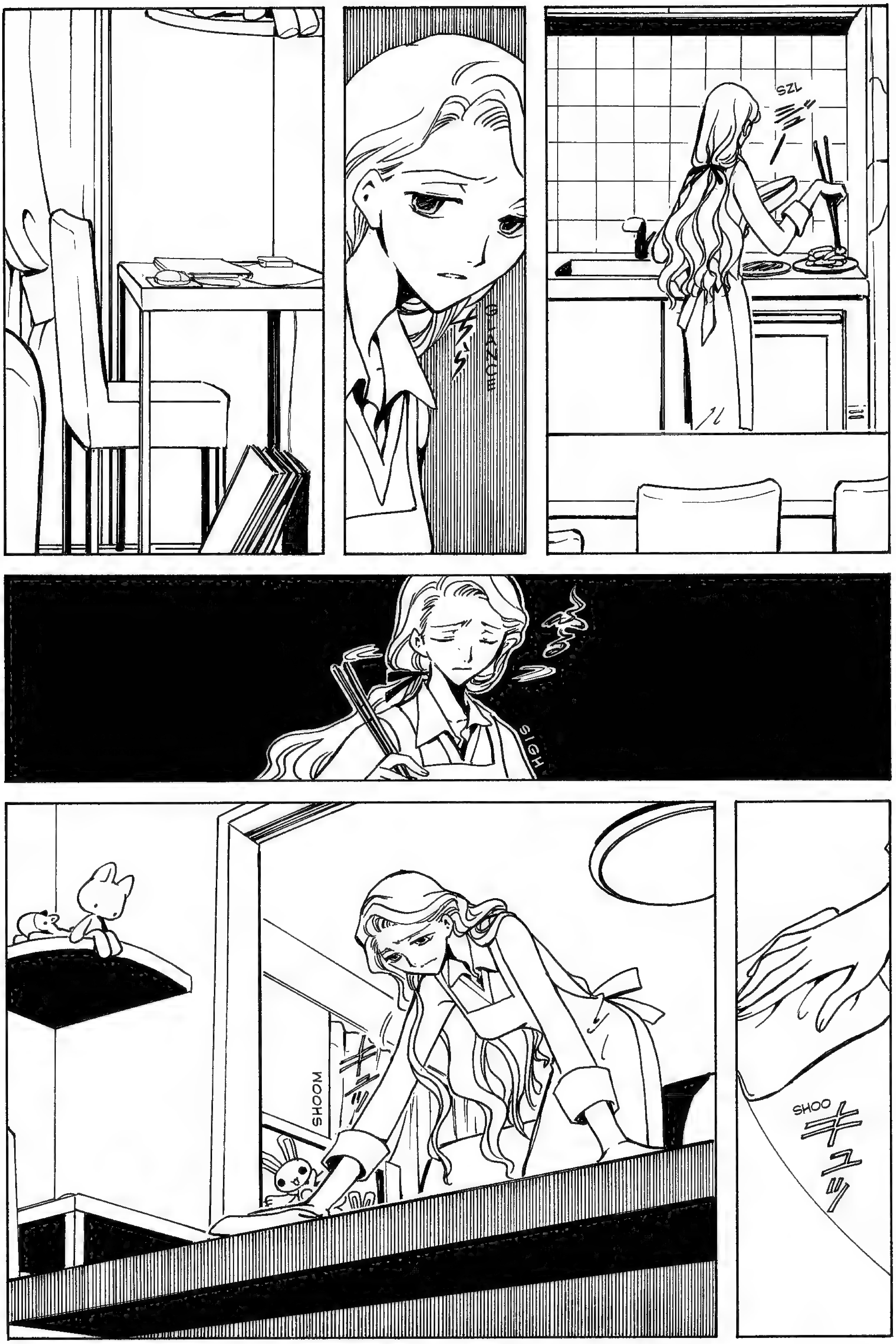

YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO QUIT, NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES...
I DO...
...WANT TO QUIT.
THEN YOU MUST NEVER TOUCH YOUR PC AGAIN.
O-OKAY.
FINE.
THEN WE'LL GO FIND A USE FOR OUR TIME...
GRABB
???
HUH?
HUH?
UMM...
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING ELSE TO THIS?

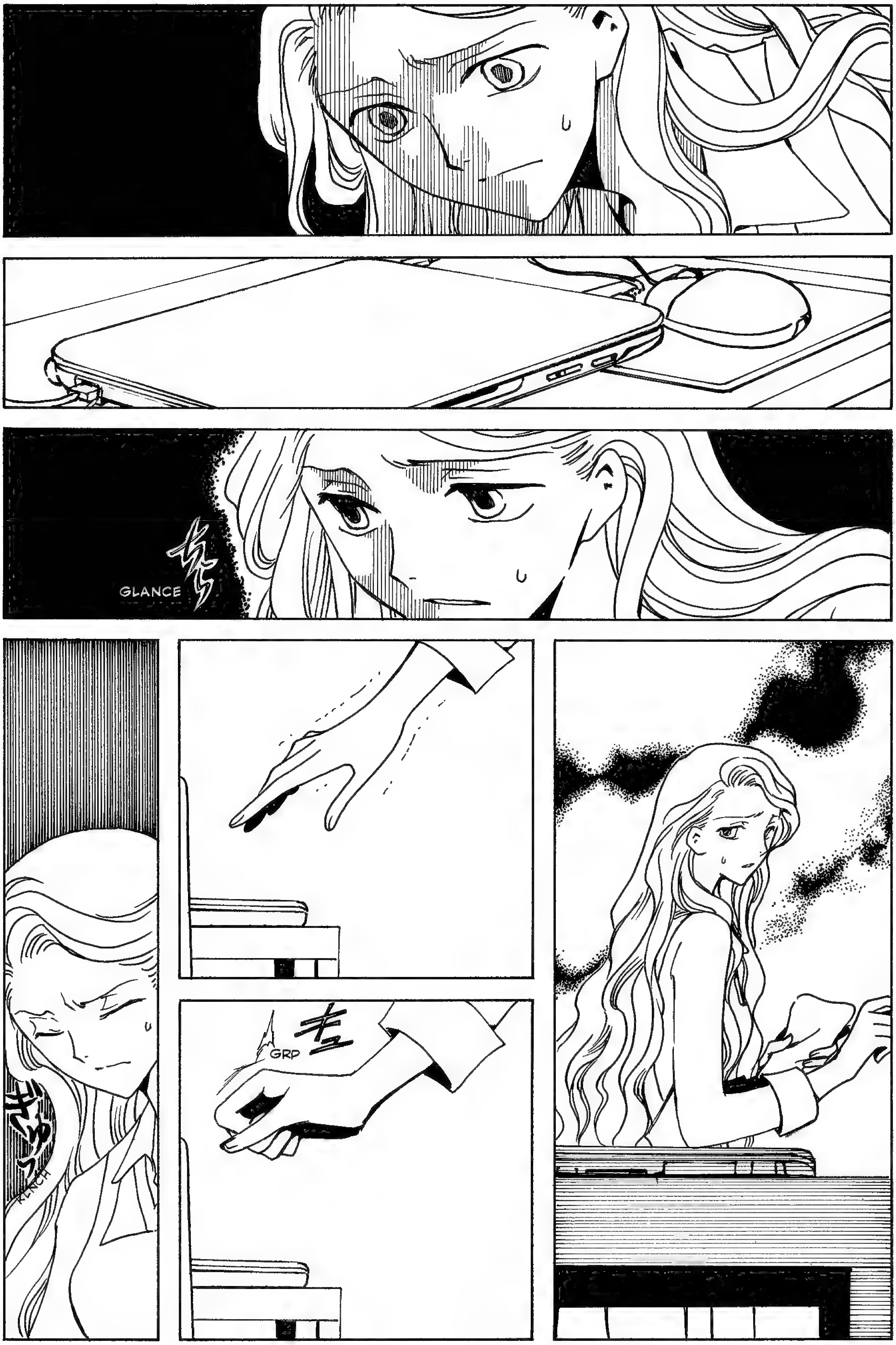

"ELSE"?
ADVICE OR SOMETHING?
BUT...
YOU DECIDED YOURSELF THAT YOU'D QUIT.
YES, I DID. BUT I...
THEN YOU HAVE TO DO IT.
IT'S A PROMISE TO YOURSELF.
KACHAK

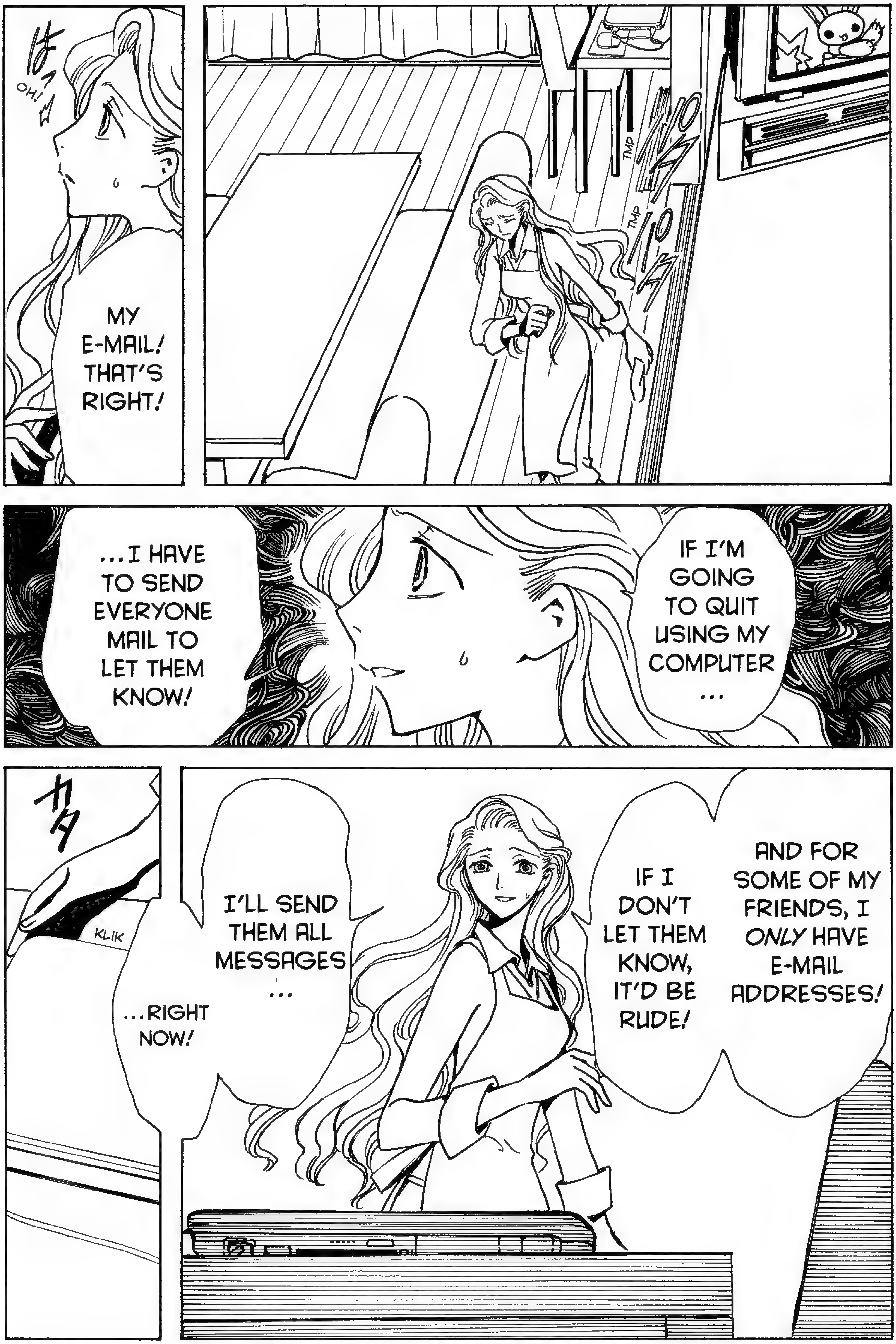

ぶちぶち
MUMBL
GRMBL
どりゃ〜
WEEE!
KER-WHAM
べしゃっ
GWASH
BOOSH
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!
GAMPH
AH HA HA HA HA!!
I STOLE A KISS!
MFFL MRFL!
WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT?!
意味わかんねー!
IS THERE SOME MEANING TO THIS?!
AND I'LL BET IT WAS YOUR *FIRST* KISS, YOU LITTLE BOY, YOU!
IT'S A GAME OF NANAKO NADESHIKO TAG!

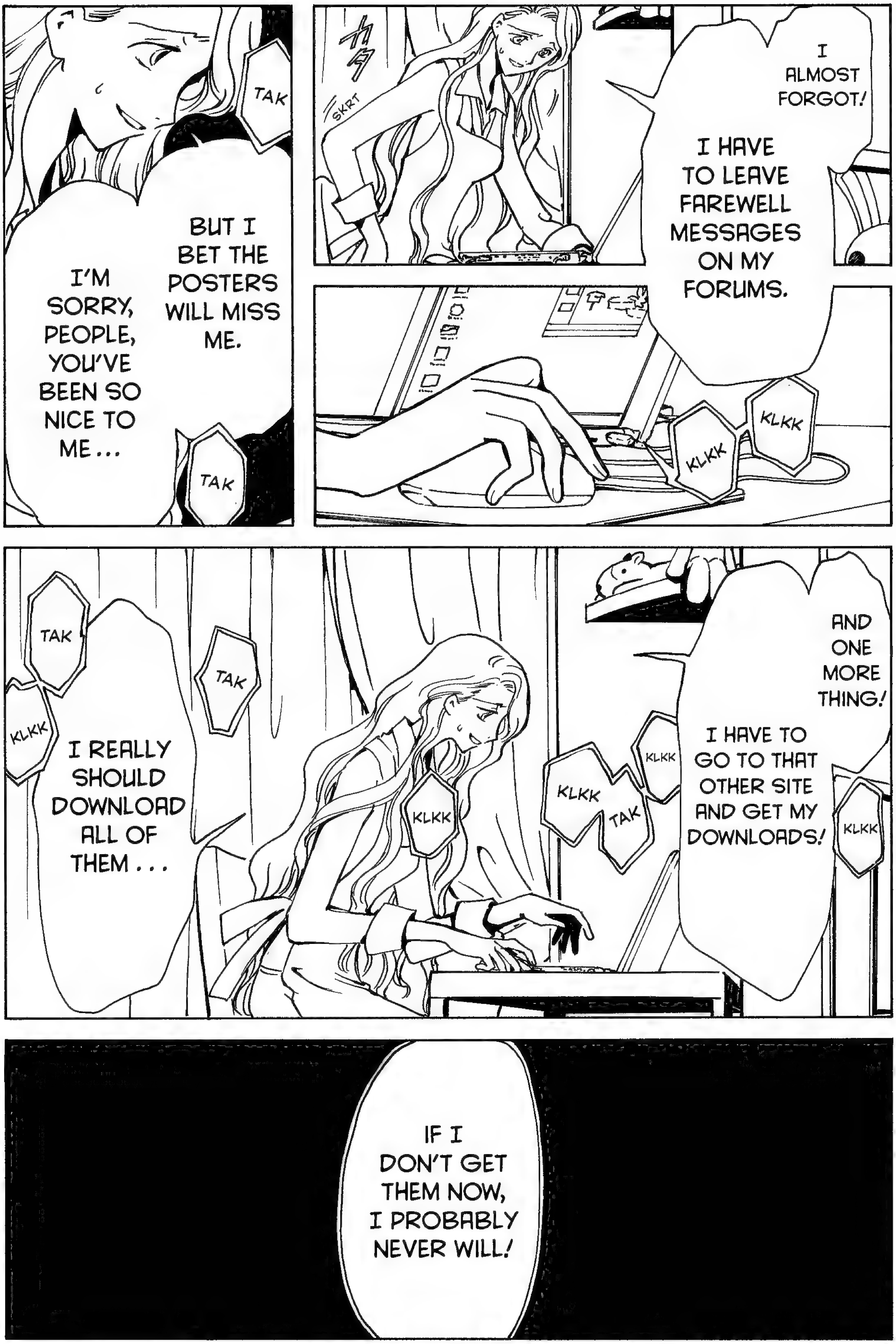

WE BARGE INTO A STRANGER'S HOUSE, THEN WE SUDDENLY LEAVE, ONLY TO COME TO PLAY IN A NEARBY PLAYGROUND!
IF WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO, I WANNA GO HOME!
どん
DONK
WE DO HAVE SOMETHING TO DO.
きゃ
きゃ
きゃ
WHEE!
WHEE!
WHEE!
WE'RE WAITING.
ぱた
ぱた
POFF POFF
FOR WHAT?
THE RESULT.

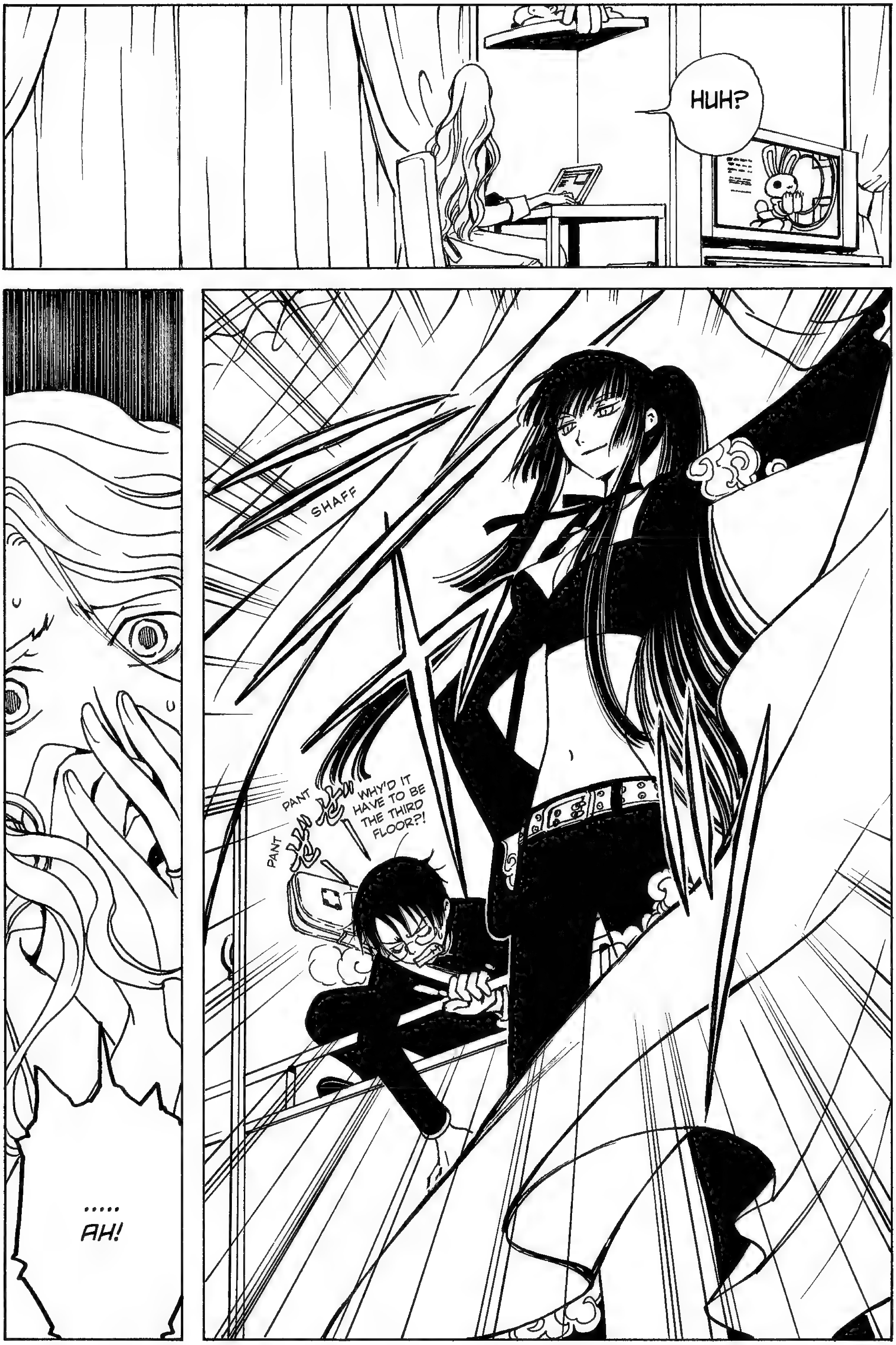
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

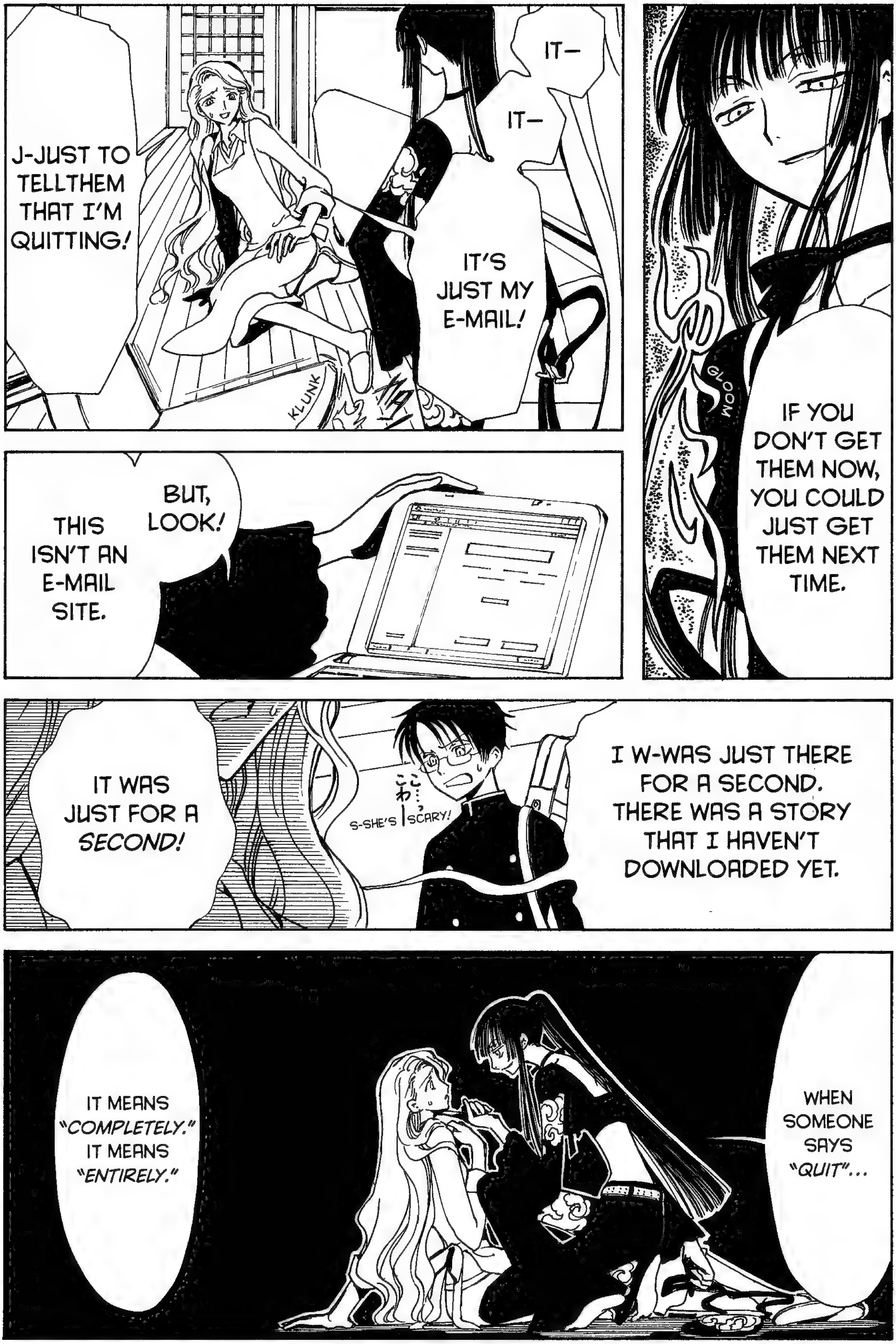

SZL
GLANCE
SIGH
SHOO
キュッ
SHOOM
キュッ

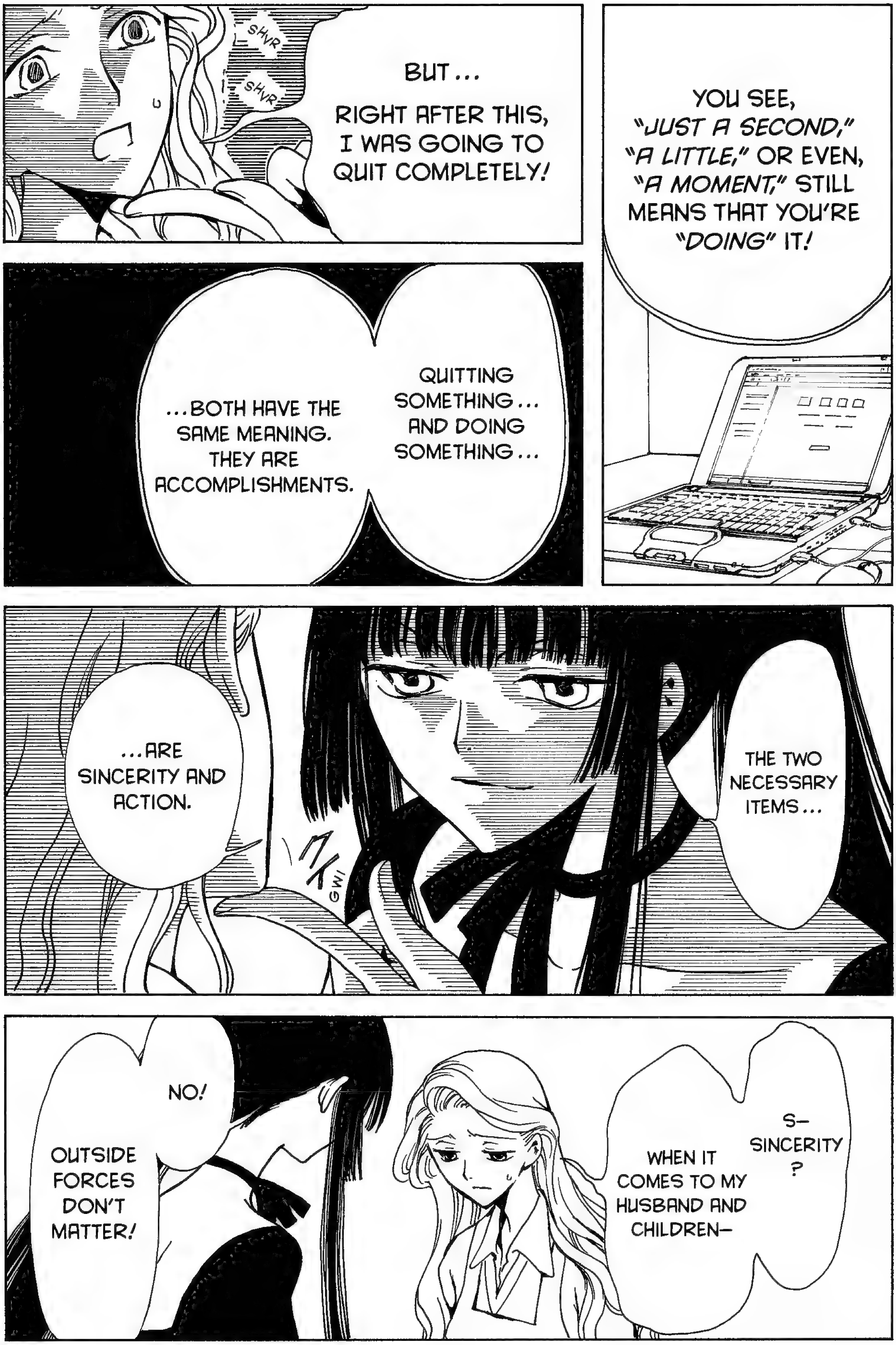

ちら
GLANCE
GRP
ぎゅっ
KLNCH

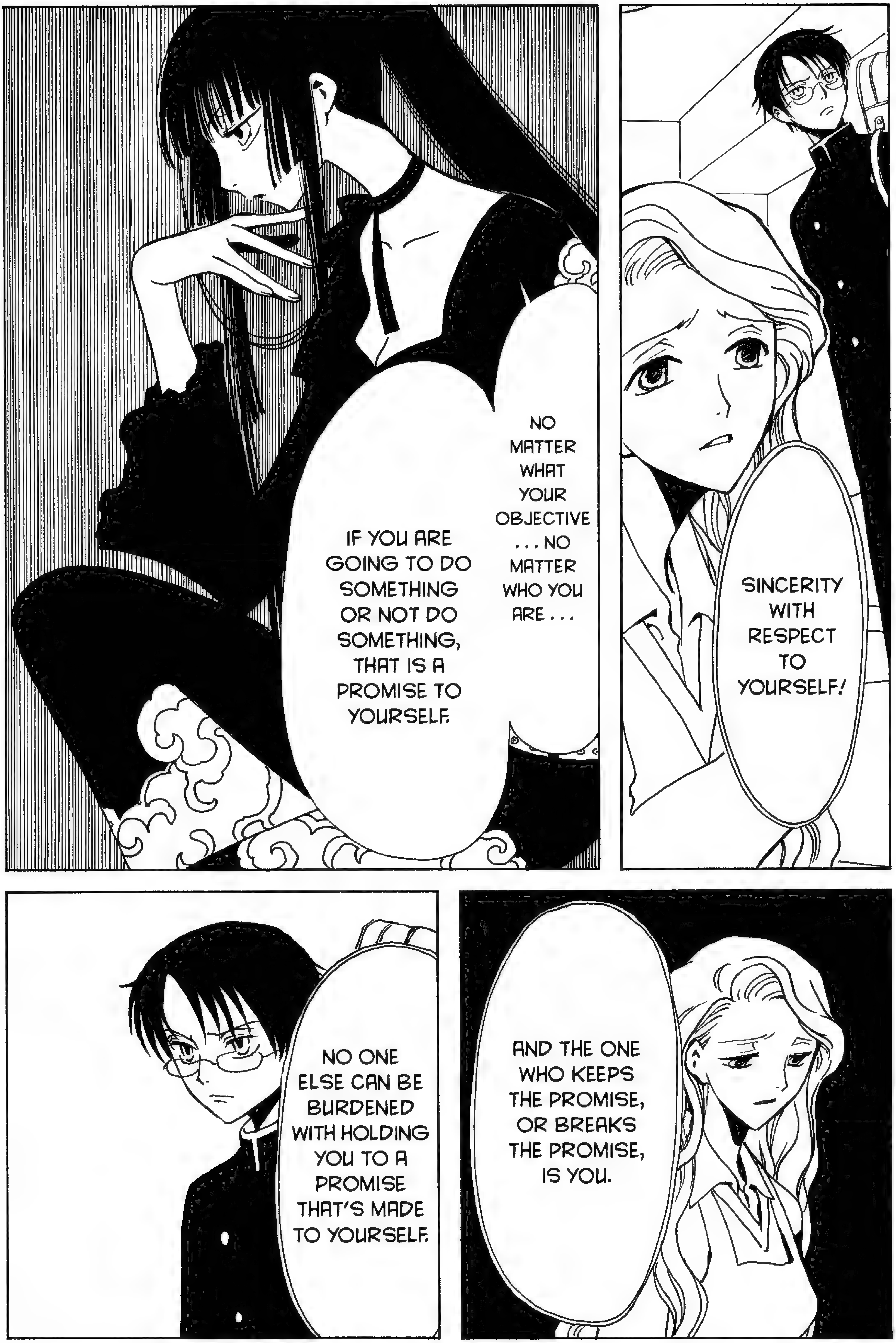

TMP
TMP
はっ
OH!
MY E-MAIL! THAT'S RIGHT!
IF I'M GOING TO QUIT USING MY COMPUTER...
...I HAVE TO SEND EVERYONE MAIL TO LET THEM KNOW!
AND FOR SOME OF MY FRIENDS, I *ONLY* HAVE E-MAIL ADDRESSES!
IF I DON'T LET THEM KNOW, IT'D BE RUDE!
I'LL SEND THEM ALL MESSAGES...
...RIGHT NOW!
カタ
KLIK

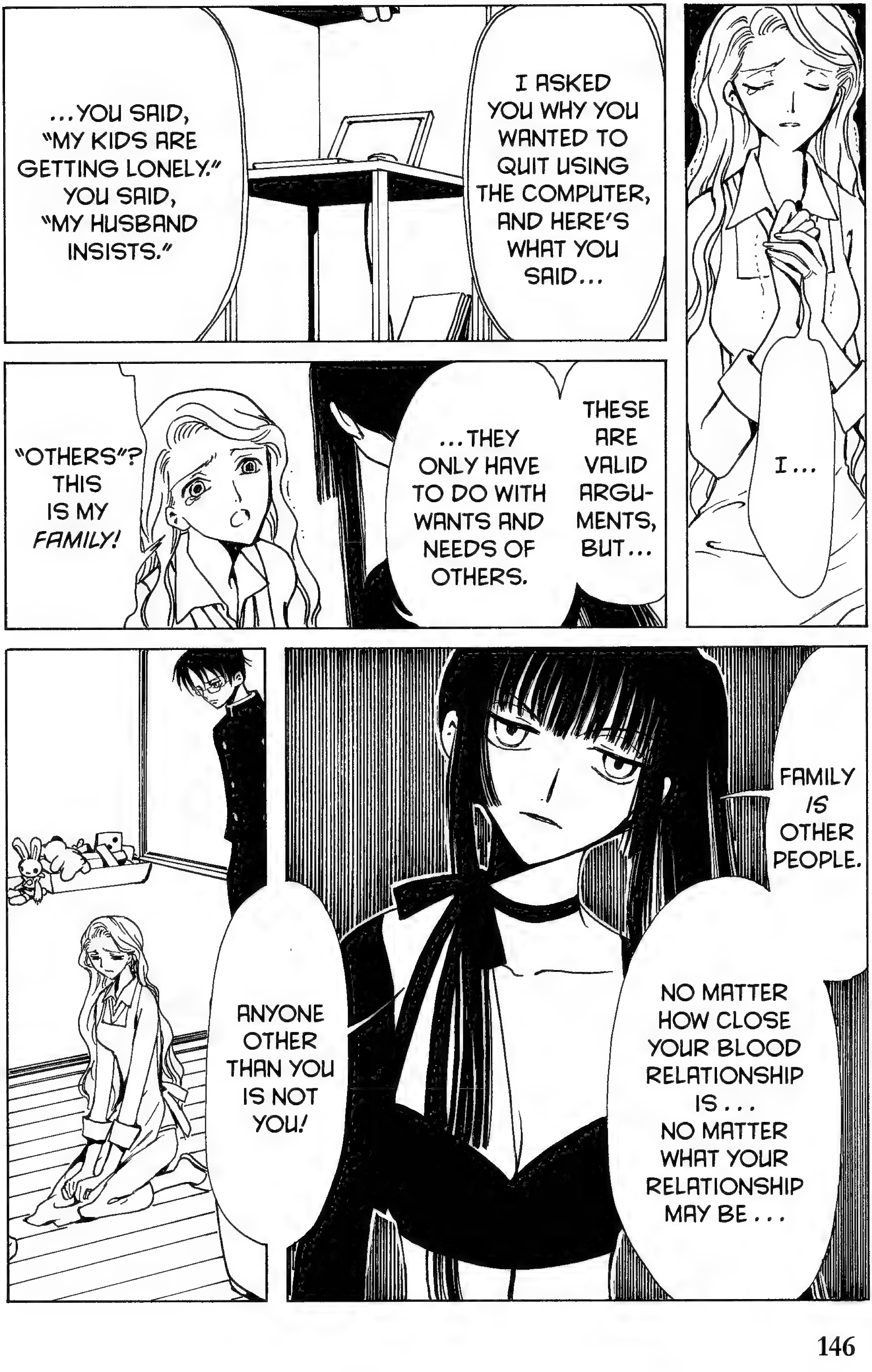

I ALMOST FORGOT!
I HAVE TO LEAVE FAREWELL MESSAGES ON MY FORUMS.
ガタ
SKRT
KLKK
KLKK
TAK
BUT I BET THE POSTERS WILL MISS ME.
I'M SORRY, PEOPLE, YOU'VE BEEN SO NICE TO ME...
TAK
AND ONE MORE THING!
I HAVE TO GO TO THAT OTHER SITE AND GET MY DOWNLOADS!
KLKK
KLKK
KLKK
TAK
KLKK
TAK
TAK
KLKK
I REALLY SHOULD DOWNLOAD ALL OF THEM...
IF I DON'T GET THEM NOW, I PROBABLY NEVER WILL!


HUH?
SHAFF
PANT PANT
WHY'D IT HAVE TO BE THE THIRD FLOOR?!
..... AH!

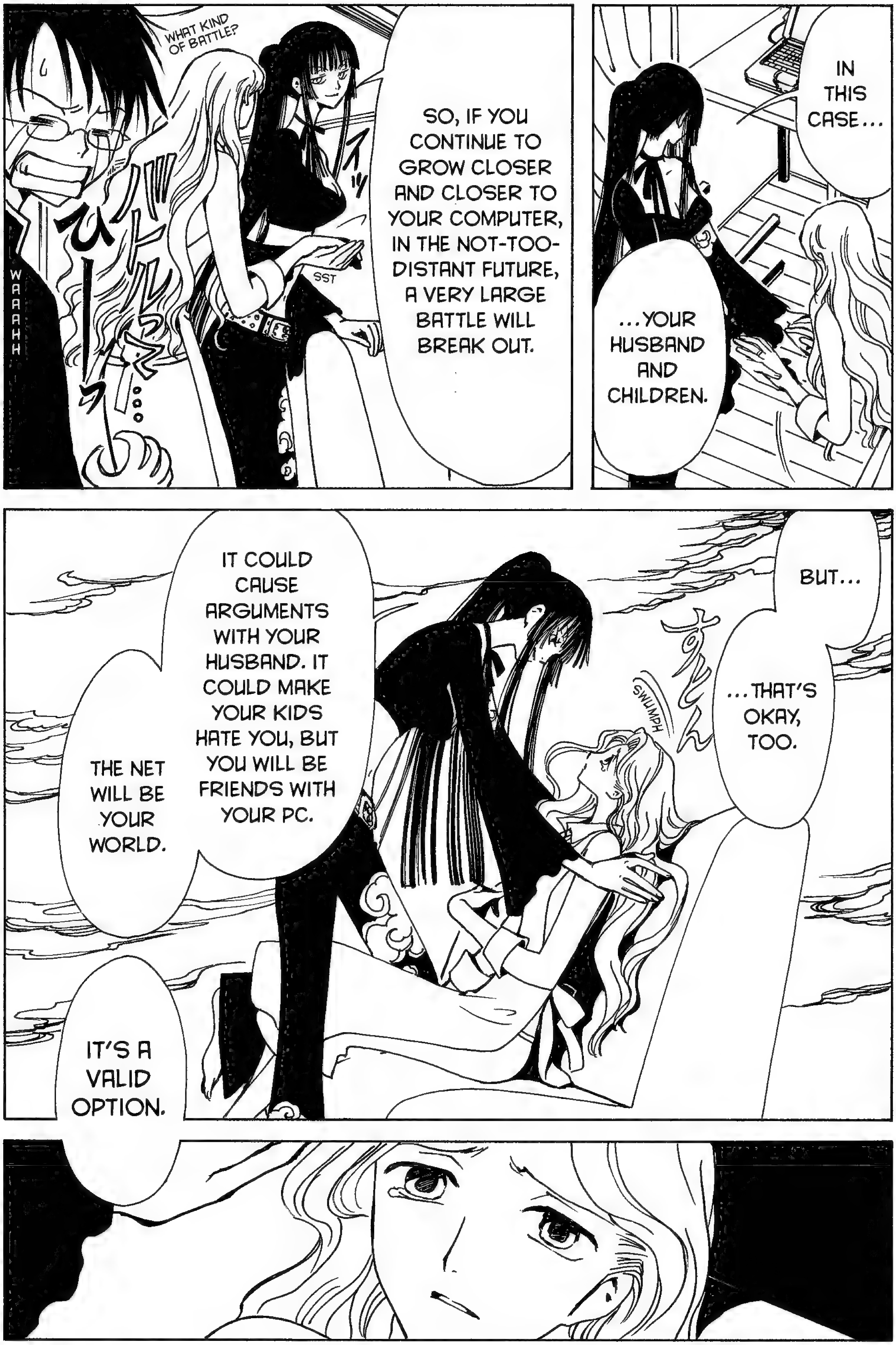

IF YOU DON'T GET THEM NOW, YOU COULD JUST GET THEM NEXT TIME.
GLOOM
IT—
IT—
IT'S JUST MY E-MAIL!
J-JUST TO TELLTHEM THAT I'M QUITTING!
KLUNK
BUT, LOOK!
THIS ISN'T AN E-MAIL SITE.
I W-WAS JUST THERE FOR A SECOND. THERE WAS A STORY THAT I HAVEN'T DOWNLOADED YET.
こわっ
S-SHE'S SCARY!
IT WAS JUST FOR A *SECOND!*
WHEN SOMEONE SAYS *"QUIT"*...
IT MEANS *"COMPLETELY."* IT MEANS *"ENTIRELY."*

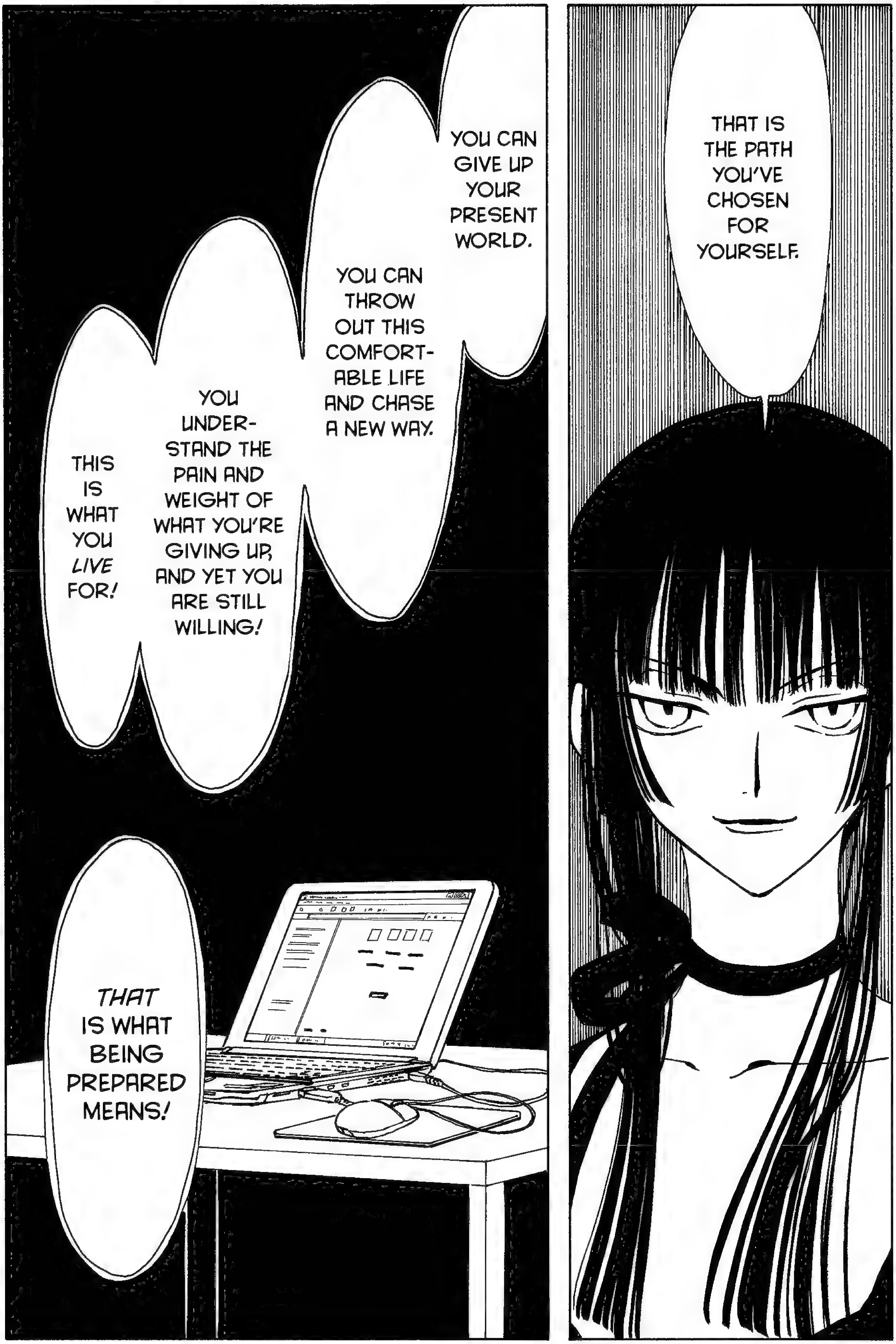

YOU SEE, *"JUST A SECOND," "A LITTLE,"* OR EVEN, *"A MOMENT,"* STILL MEANS THAT YOU'RE *"DOING"* IT!
BUT... RIGHT AFTER THIS, I WAS GOING TO QUIT COMPLETELY!
SHVR SHVR
QUITTING SOMETHING... AND DOING SOMETHING...
...BOTH HAVE THE SAME MEANING. THEY ARE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
THE TWO NECESSARY ITEMS...
...ARE SINCERITY AND ACTION.
GWI
S— SINCERITY?
WHEN IT COMES TO MY HUSBAND AND CHILDREN—
NO!
OUTSIDE FORCES DON'T MATTER!

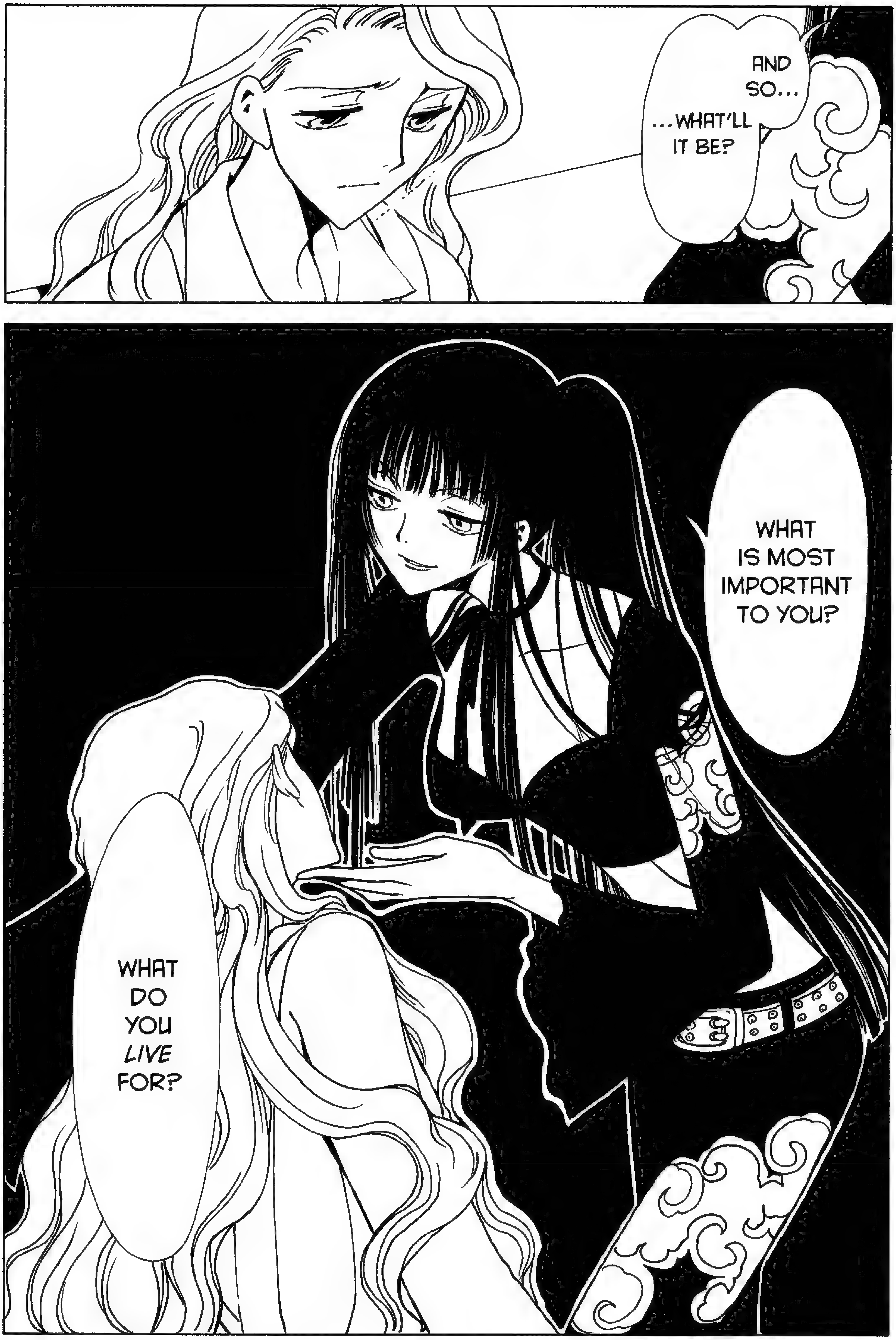

SINCERITY WITH RESPECT TO YOURSELF!
NO MATTER WHAT YOUR OBJECTIVE . . . NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE . . .
IF YOU ARE GOING TO DO SOMETHING OR NOT DO SOMETHING, THAT IS A PROMISE TO YOURSELF.
AND THE ONE WHO KEEPS THE PROMISE, OR BREAKS THE PROMISE, IS YOU.
NO ONE ELSE CAN BE BURDENED WITH HOLDING YOU TO A PROMISE THAT'S MADE TO YOURSELF.


I…
I ASKED YOU WHY YOU WANTED TO QUIT USING THE COMPUTER, AND HERE'S WHAT YOU SAID…
…YOU SAID, "MY KIDS ARE GETTING LONELY." YOU SAID, "MY HUSBAND INSISTS."
THESE ARE VALID ARGUMENTS, BUT…
…THEY ONLY HAVE TO DO WITH WANTS AND NEEDS OF OTHERS.
"OTHERS"? THIS IS MY *FAMILY!*
FAMILY *IS* OTHER PEOPLE.
NO MATTER HOW CLOSE YOUR BLOOD RELATIONSHIP IS… NO MATTER WHAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP MAY BE…
ANYONE OTHER THAN YOU IS NOT YOU!

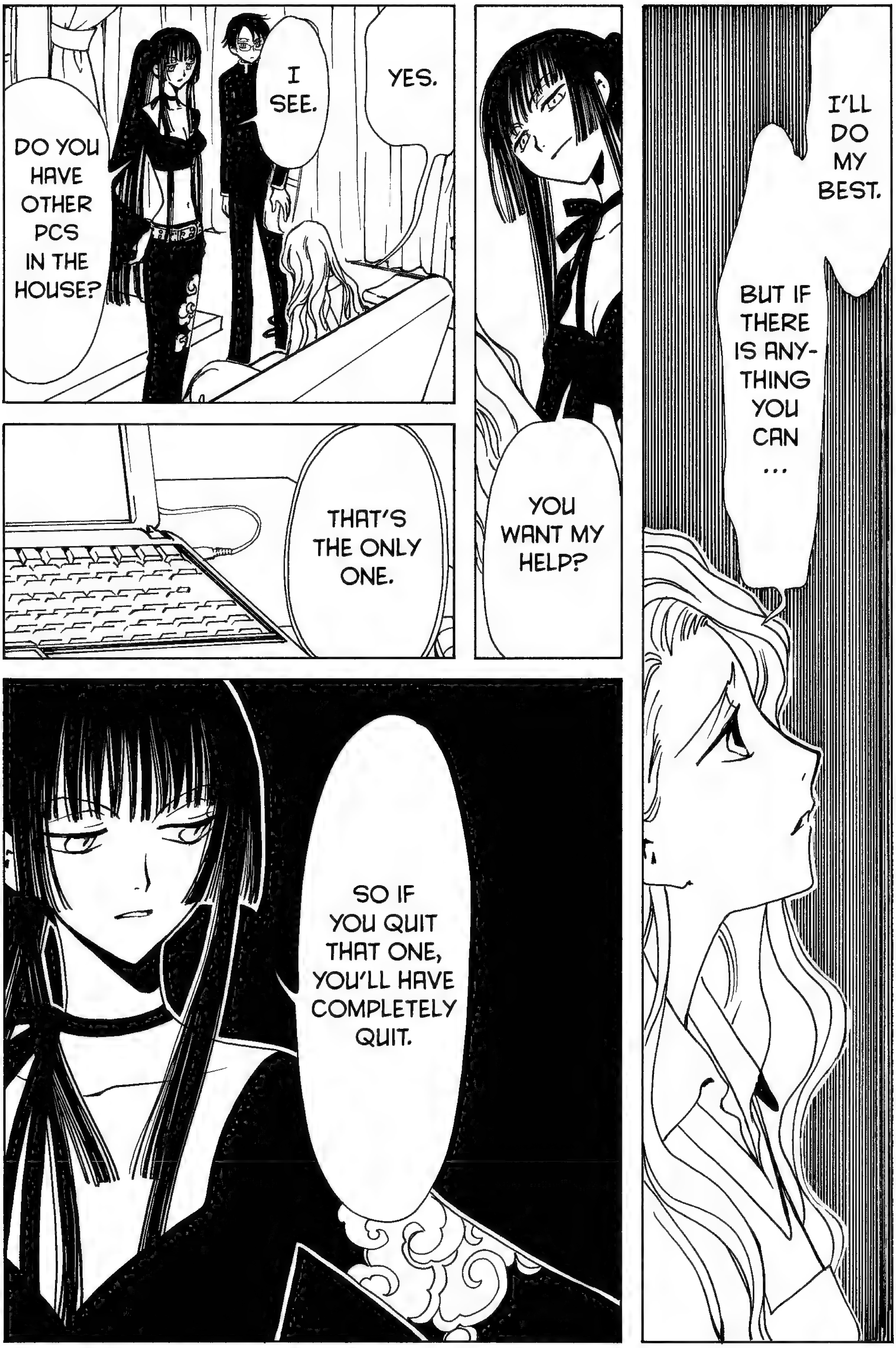
AND SO YOU HAVE TO THINK IT OVER AND DECIDE FOR *YOURSELF!*
TAKE AWAY OTHER PEOPLE'S WANTS AND NEEDS, AND DECIDE IF THIS IS SOMETHING THAT IS NECESSARY FOR *YOU!*
IT MAY CAUSE HARDSHIP TO OTHERS…
…BUT YOU WANT IT.
THAT'S YOUR FREE WILL RIGHT THERE!
BUT YOU IGNORE THAT AND DECIDE BASED ON SOMEONE ELSE'S ADVICE, BECAUSE DECENCY DEMANDS IT, BECAUSE PEOPLE SAY IT'S AWFUL, YOU WILL FAIL TO QUIT.
NO ONE COULD SUCCEED THAT WAY!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO.
WITH THAT AS YOUR BACKGROUND, HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO MAKE A PROMISE TO YOURSELF?
SST
BUT THE OPPOSITE WAY…
…THERE ARE RISKS THERE, TOO, OF COURSE.
IF YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THE ACTION THAT BEST SUITS YOU, THERE WILL BE PEOPLE WHO WON'T UNDERSTAND… PEOPLE WILL BE SADDENED BY YOUR ACTIONS.

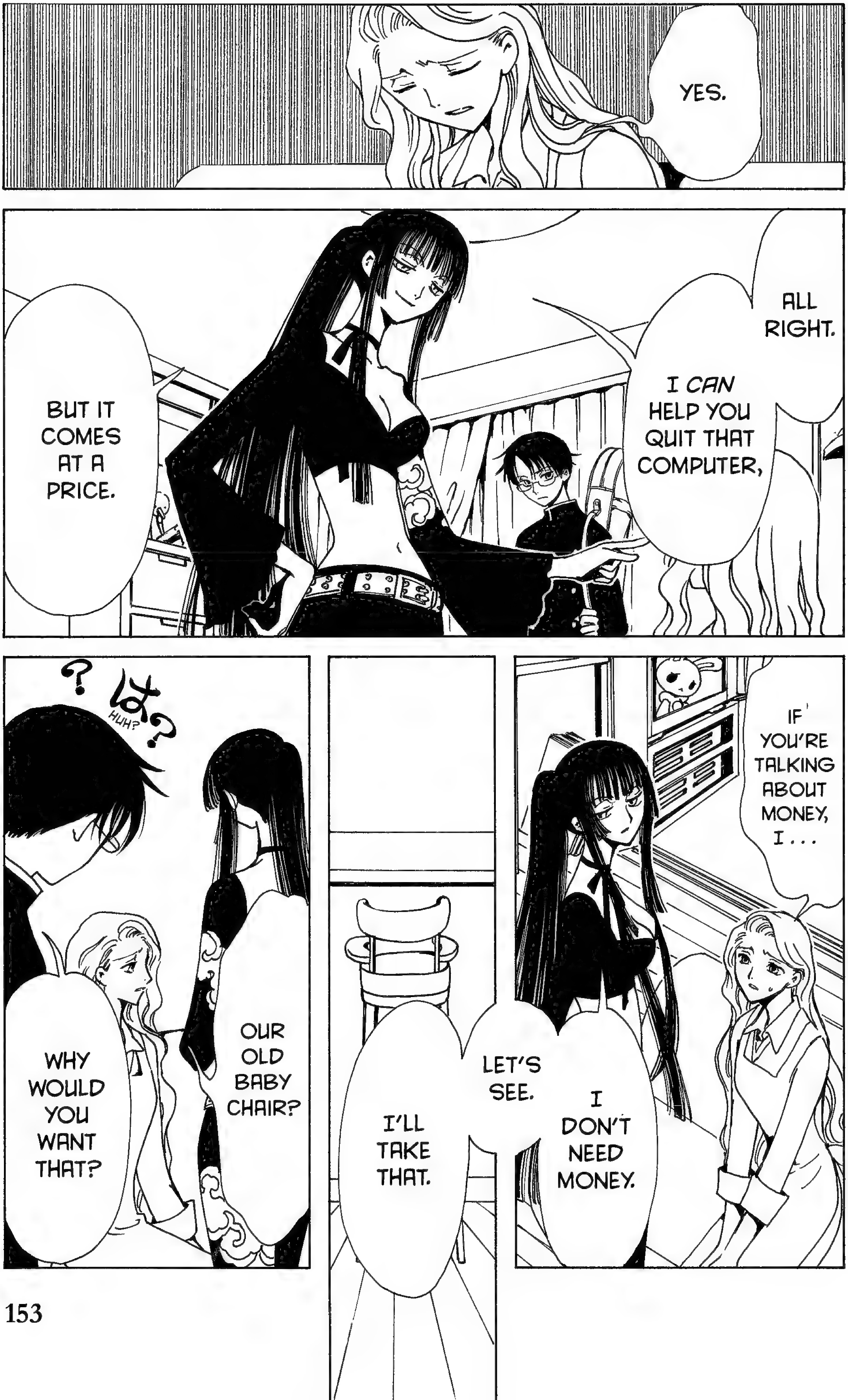

IN THIS CASE…
…YOUR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN.
SO, IF YOU CONTINUE TO GROW CLOSER AND CLOSER TO YOUR COMPUTER, IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE, A VERY LARGE BATTLE WILL BREAK OUT.
WHAT KIND OF BATTLE?
SST
WAAAHH
BUT…
…THAT'S OKAY, TOO.
SWUMPH
IT COULD CAUSE ARGUMENTS WITH YOUR HUSBAND. IT COULD MAKE YOUR KIDS HATE YOU, BUT YOU WILL BE FRIENDS WITH YOUR PC.
THE NET WILL BE YOUR WORLD.
IT'S A VALID OPTION.

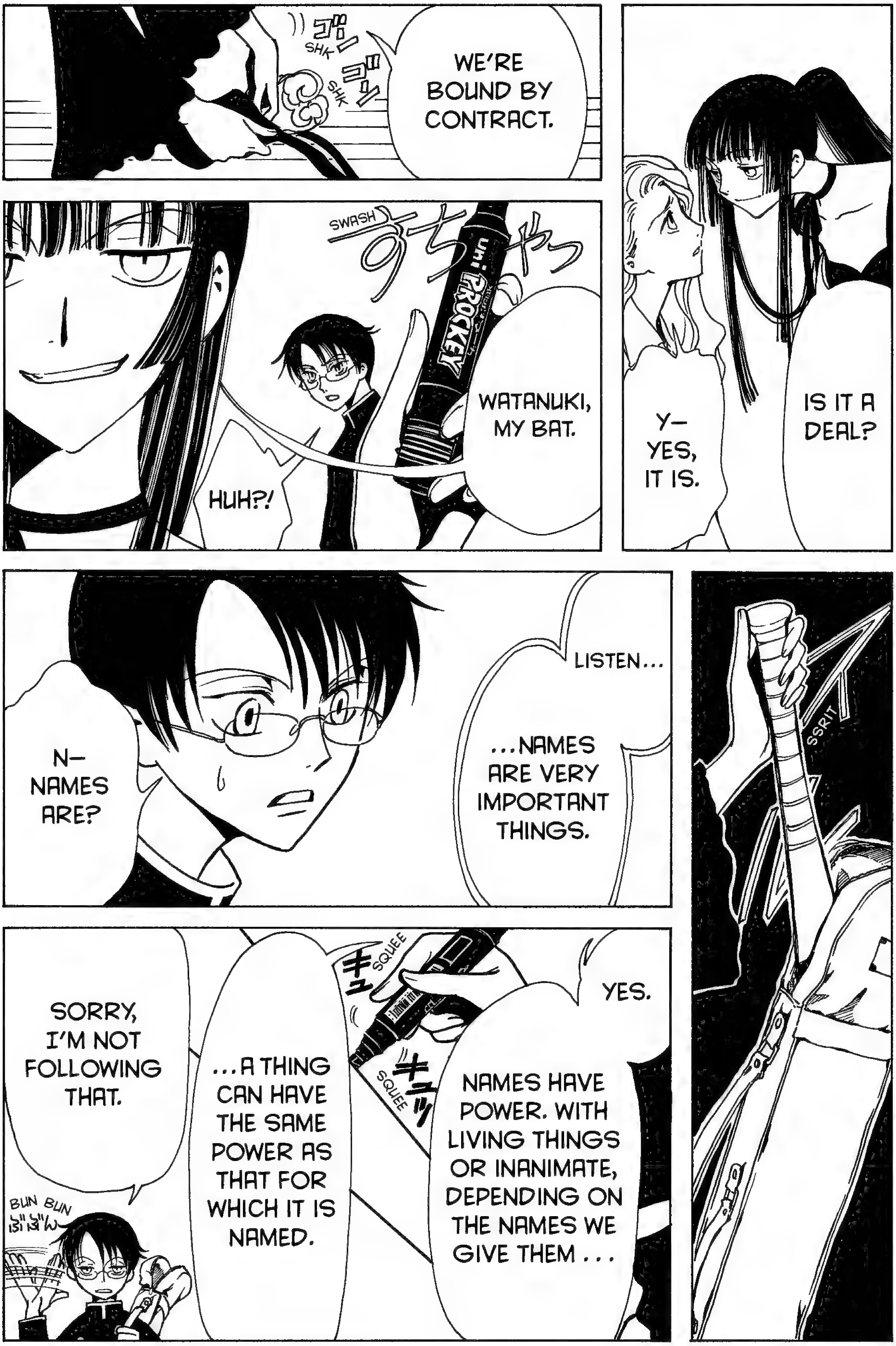

THAT IS THE PATH YOU'VE CHOSEN FOR YOURSELF.
YOU CAN GIVE UP YOUR PRESENT WORLD.
YOU CAN THROW OUT THIS COMFORTABLE LIFE AND CHASE A NEW WAY.
YOU UNDERSTAND THE PAIN AND WEIGHT OF WHAT YOU'RE GIVING UP, AND YET YOU ARE STILL WILLING!
THIS IS WHAT YOU *LIVE* FOR!
THAT IS WHAT BEING PREPARED MEANS!

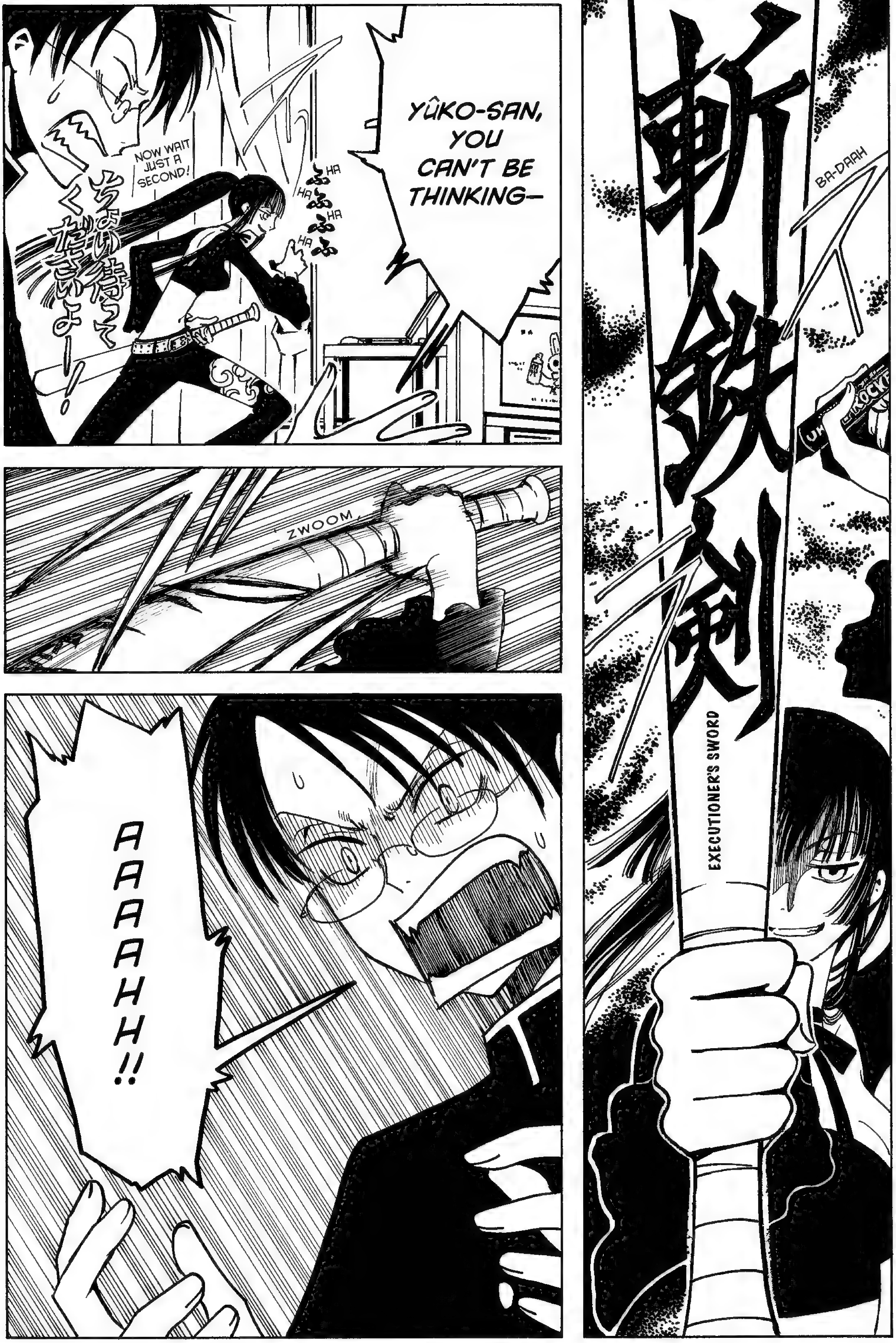

AND SO...
...WHAT'LL IT BE?
WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?
WHAT DO YOU *LIVE* FOR?

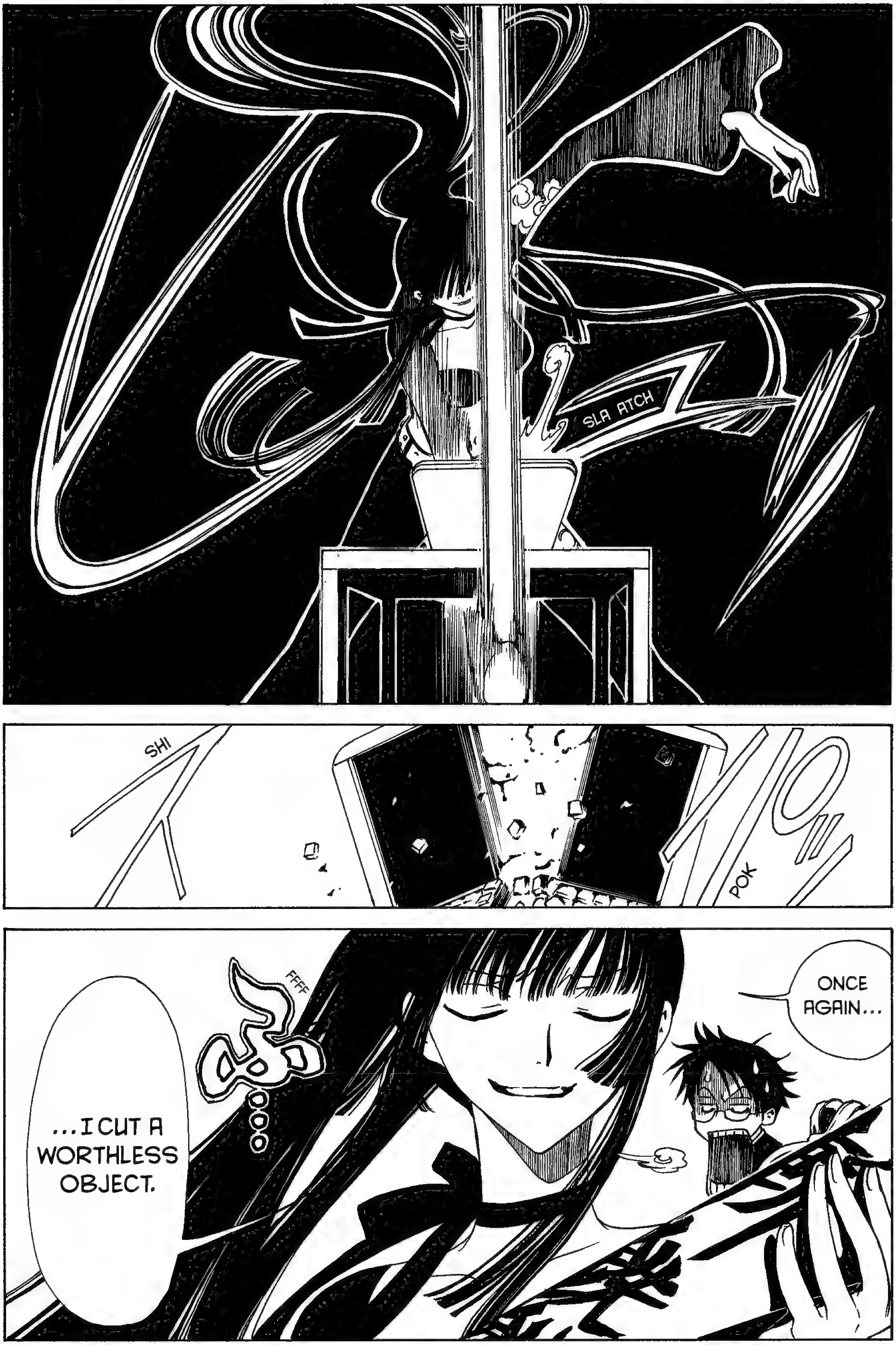
I WANT TO GIVE UP THE COMPUTER.
DO YOU MEAN THAT?
I DON'T WANT ...
...TO GIVE UP MY PRESENT LIFE.
CAN YOU QUIT BY YOURSELF?

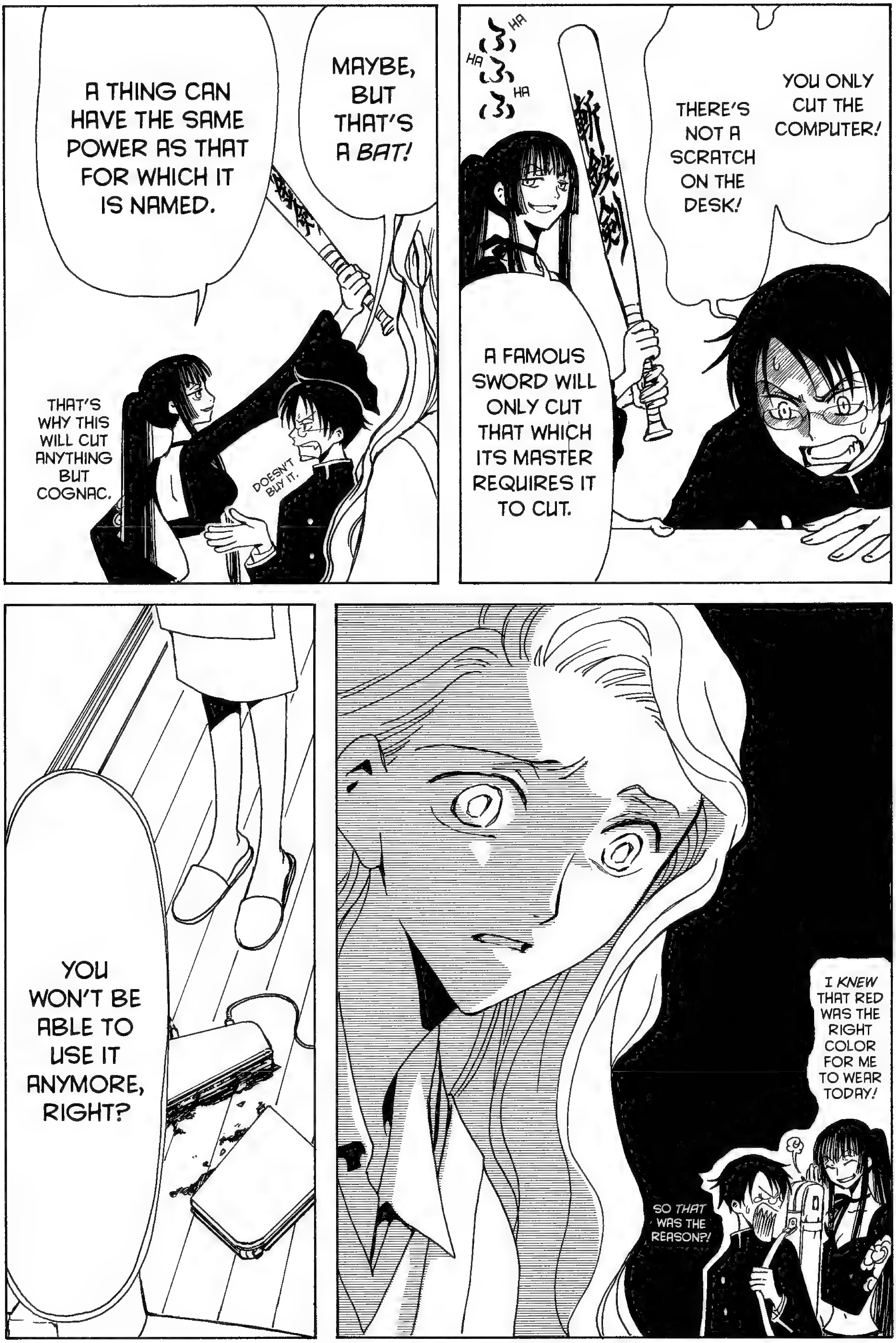

I'LL DO MY BEST.
BUT IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU CAN . . .
YOU WANT MY HELP?
YES.
I SEE.
DO YOU HAVE OTHER PCS IN THE HOUSE?
THAT'S THE ONLY ONE.
SO IF YOU QUIT THAT ONE, YOU'LL HAVE COMPLETELY QUIT.

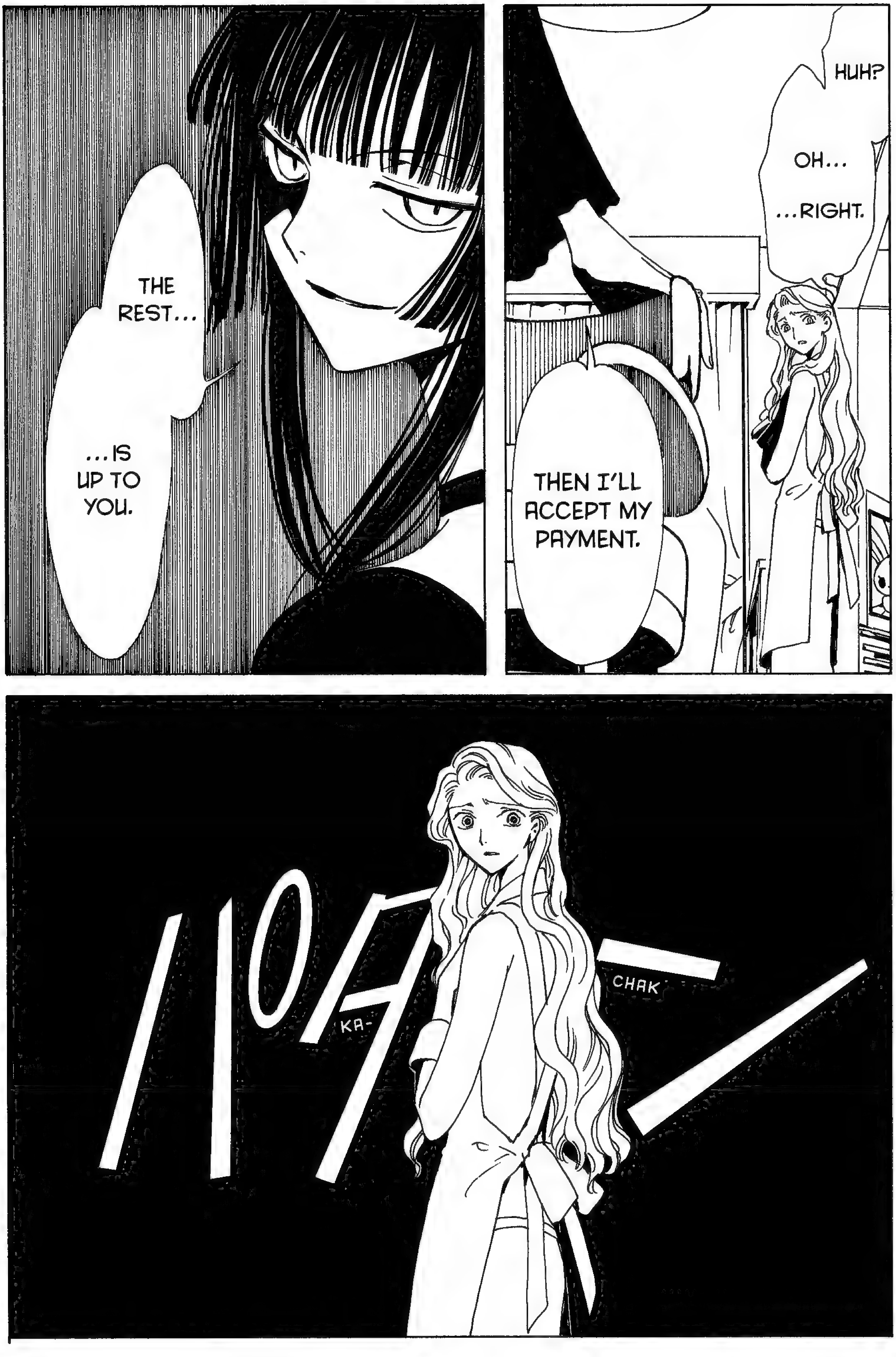

YES.
ALL RIGHT.
I *CAN* HELP YOU QUIT THAT COMPUTER,
BUT IT COMES AT A PRICE.
IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT MONEY, I . . .
I DON'T NEED MONEY.
LET'S SEE.
I'LL TAKE THAT.
OUR OLD BABY CHAIR?
WHY WOULD YOU WANT THAT?
? は？
HUH?

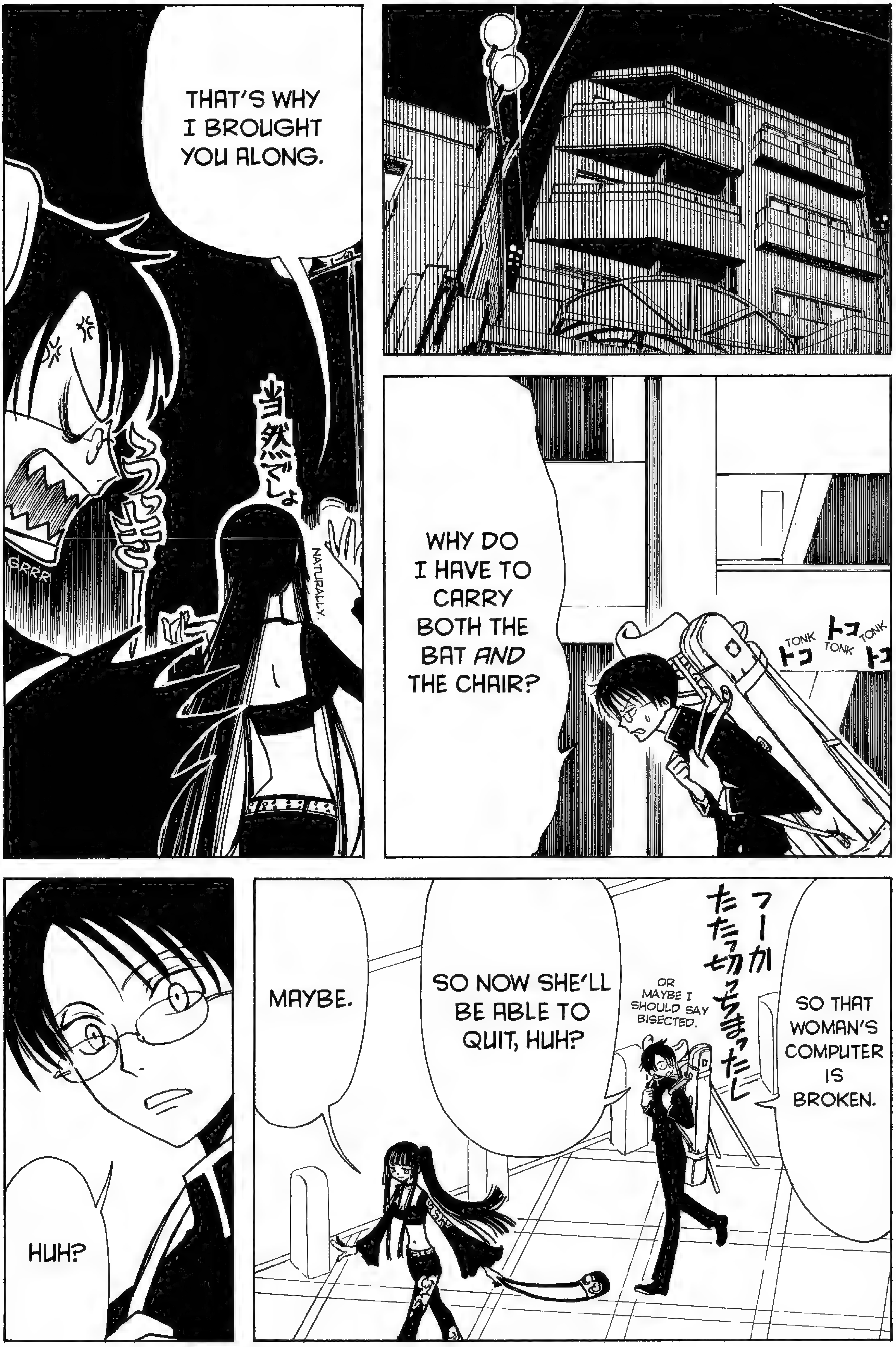

IS IT A DEAL?
Y— YES, IT IS.
SHK SHK
WE'RE BOUND BY CONTRACT.
SWASH
すちゃっ
uni PROCKEY
WATANUKI, MY BAT.
HUH?!
SSRIT
LISTEN...
...NAMES ARE VERY IMPORTANT THINGS.
N— NAMES ARE?
YES.
SQUEE
キュ
キュッ
SQUEE
NAMES HAVE POWER. WITH LIVING THINGS OR INANIMATE, DEPENDING ON THE NAMES WE GIVE THEM . . .
...A THING CAN HAVE THE SAME POWER AS THAT FOR WHICH IT IS NAMED.
SORRY, I'M NOT FOLLOWING THAT.
BUN BUN
ぶんぶん

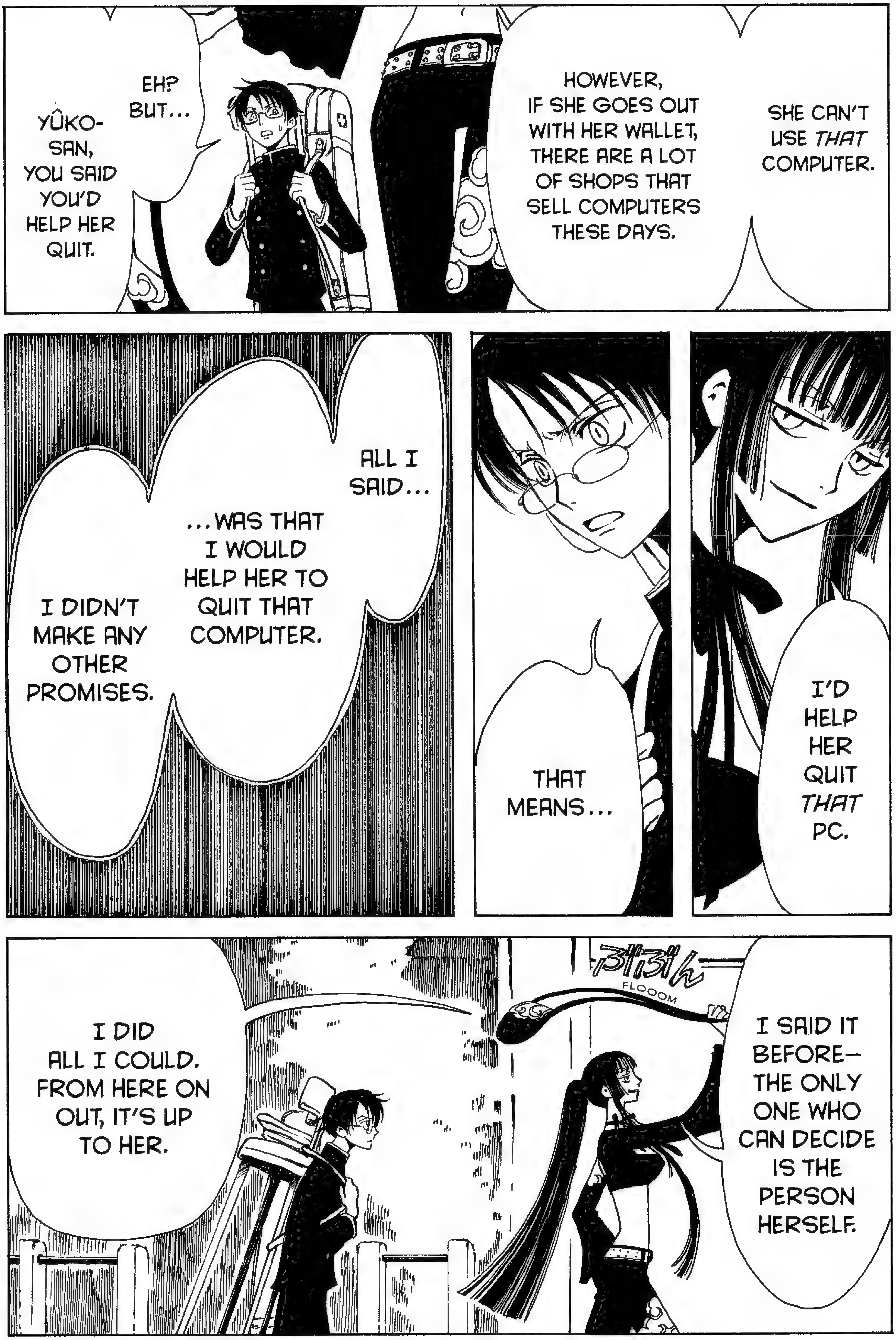

斬鉄剣
EXECUTIONER'S SWORD
BA-DAAH
YÛKO-SAN, YOU CAN'T BE THINKING—
ふふふふ
HA HA HA HA
ちょっと待ってくださいよー！
NOW WAIT JUST A SECOND!
ZWOOM
AAAAAHH!!

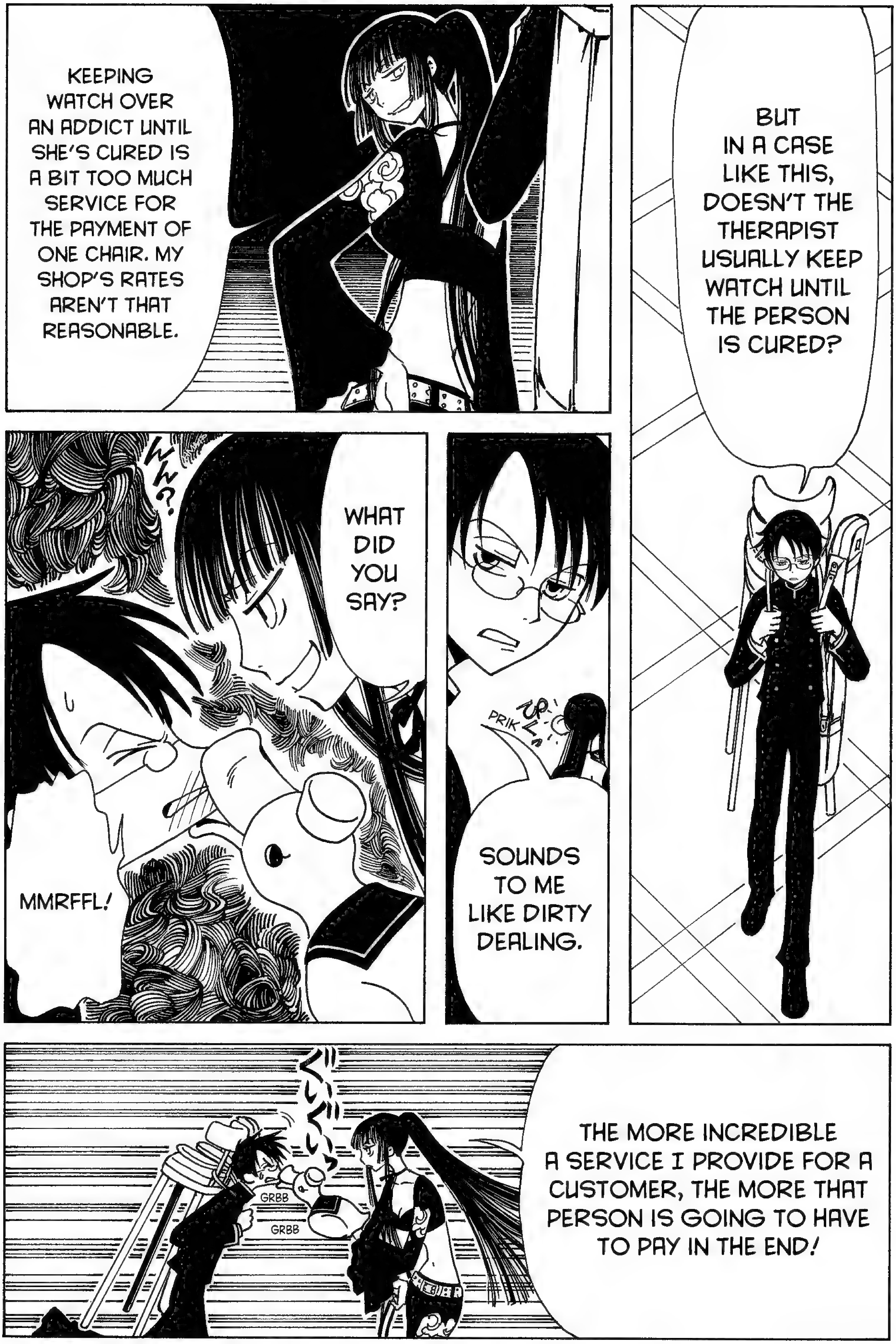

SLA ATCH
POK
SHI
ONCE AGAIN...
FFFF
...I CUT A WORTHLESS OBJECT.

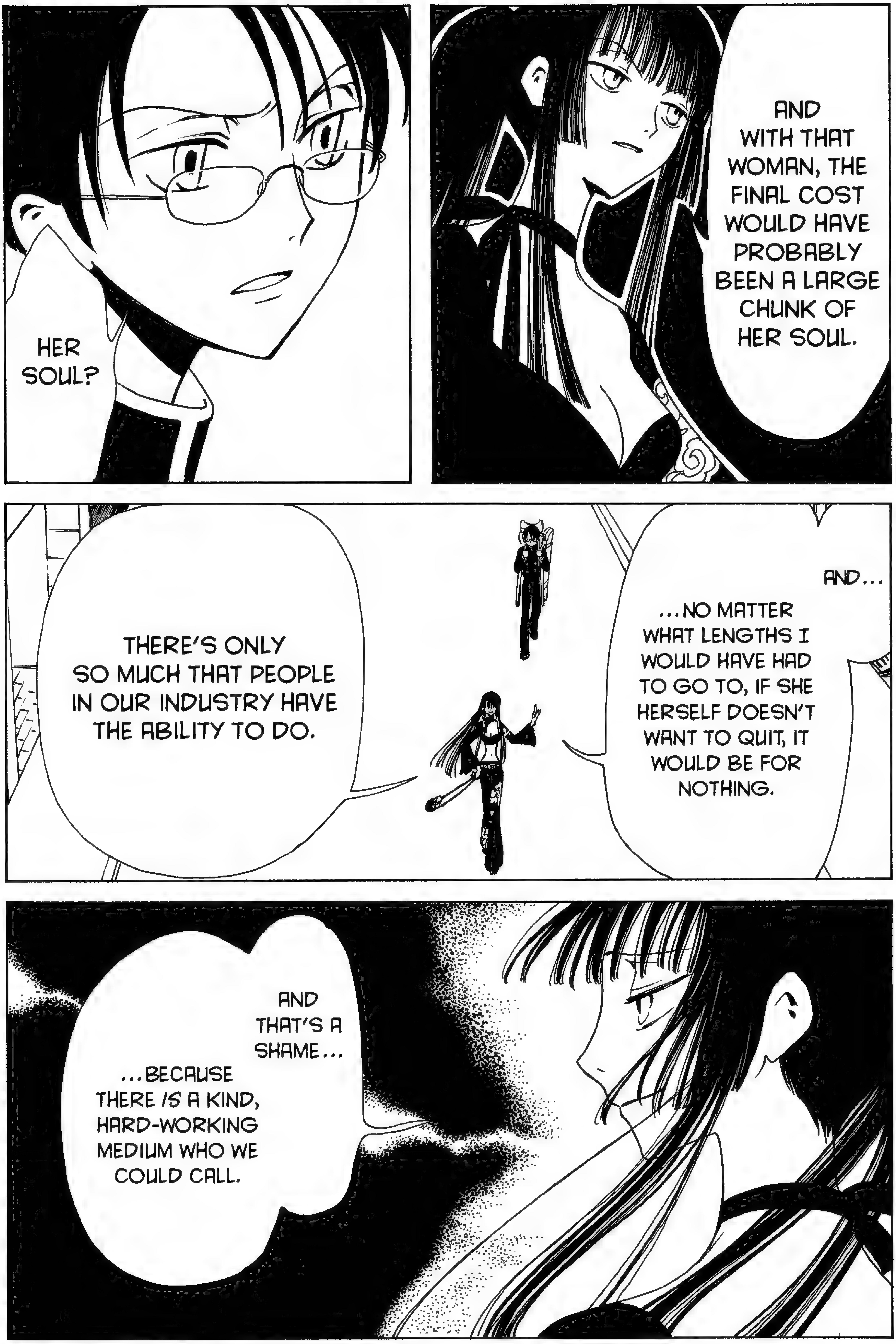

YOU ONLY CUT THE COMPUTER!
THERE'S NOT A SCRATCH ON THE DESK!
ふ HA ふ HA ふ HA
斬鉄剣
A FAMOUS SWORD WILL ONLY CUT THAT WHICH ITS MASTER REQUIRES IT TO CUT.
MAYBE, BUT THAT'S A *BAT!*
A THING CAN HAVE THE SAME POWER AS THAT FOR WHICH IT IS NAMED.
DOESN'T BUY IT.
THAT'S WHY THIS WILL CUT ANYTHING BUT COGNAC.
I *KNEW* THAT RED WAS THE RIGHT COLOR FOR ME TO WEAR TODAY!
SO *THAT* WAS THE REASON?!
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO USE IT ANYMORE, RIGHT?

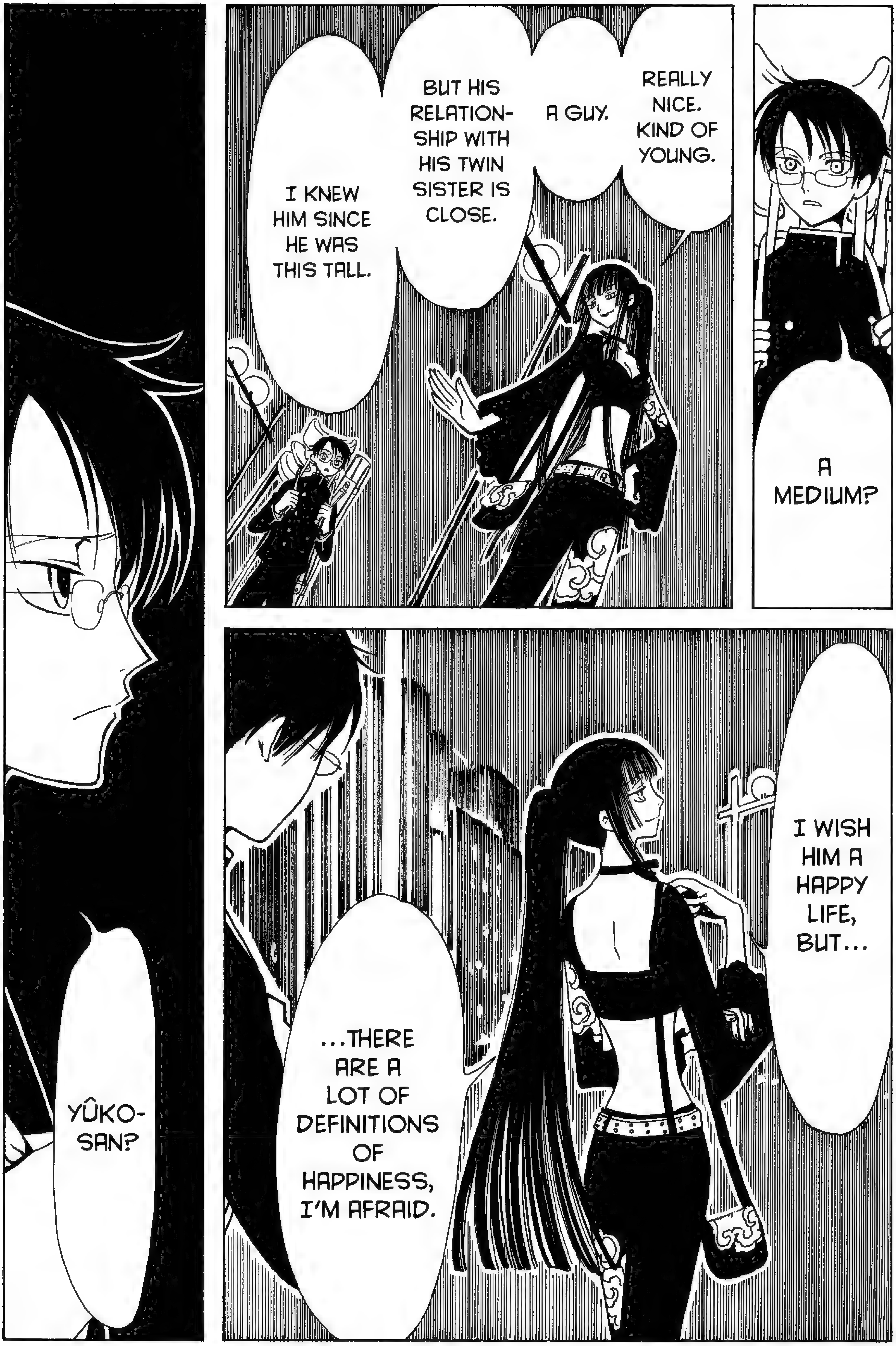

HUH?
OH...
...RIGHT.
THEN I'LL ACCEPT MY PAYMENT.
THE REST...
...IS UP TO YOU.
KA-
CHAK

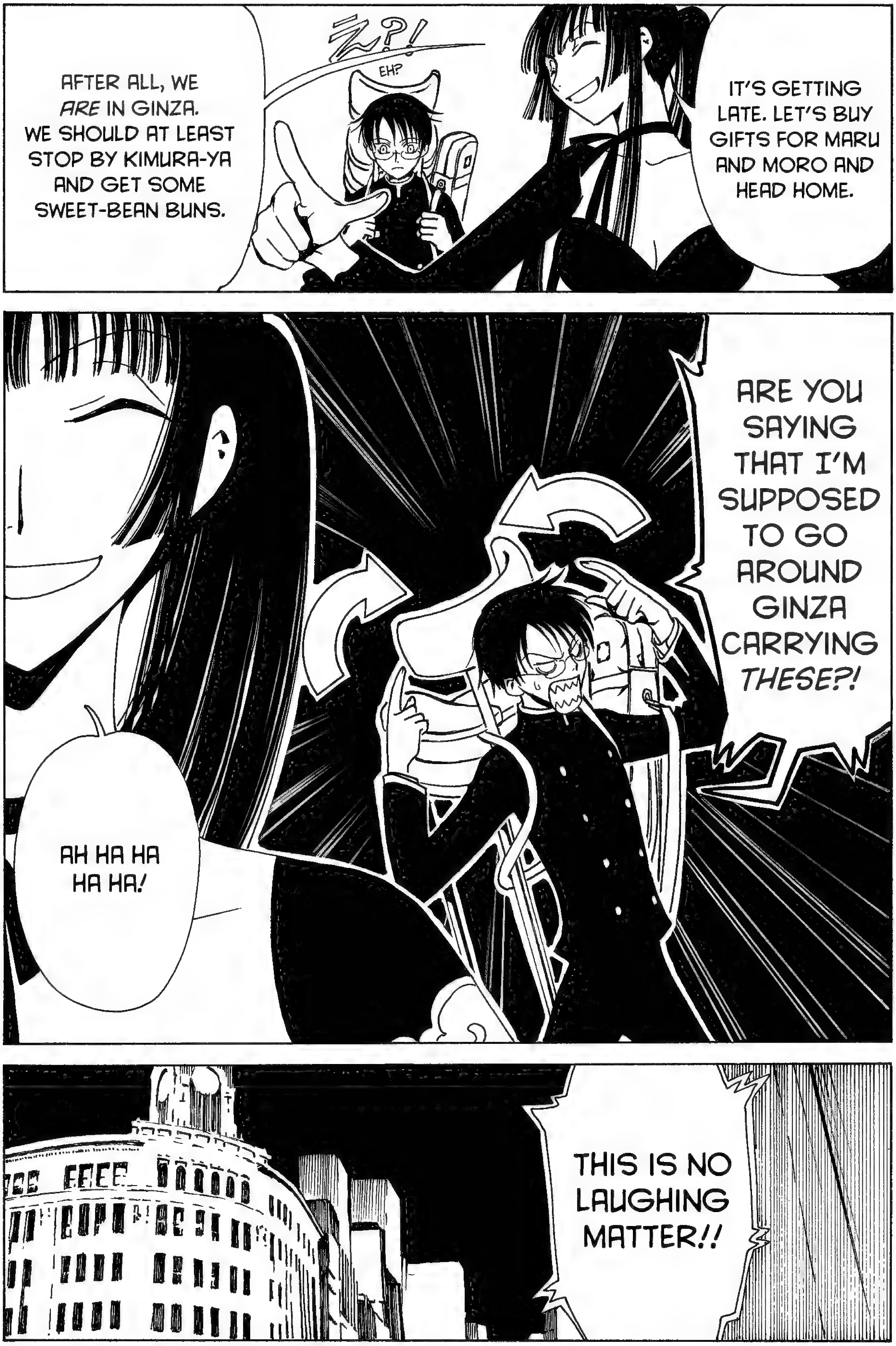

WHY DO I HAVE TO CARRY BOTH THE BAT *AND* THE CHAIR?
トコ トコ トコ
TONK TONK TONK
THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT YOU ALONG.
うっきー
GRRR
当然でしょ
NATURALLY.
SO THAT WOMAN'S COMPUTER IS BROKEN.
フーか たたっ切っちまったし
OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY BISECTED.
SO NOW SHE'LL BE ABLE TO QUIT, HUH?
MAYBE.
HUH?


SHE CAN'T USE *THAT* COMPUTER.
HOWEVER, IF SHE GOES OUT WITH HER WALLET, THERE ARE A LOT OF SHOPS THAT SELL COMPUTERS THESE DAYS.
EH? BUT...
YÛKO-SAN, YOU SAID YOU'D HELP HER QUIT.
I'D HELP HER QUIT *THAT* PC.
THAT MEANS...
ALL I SAID...
...WAS THAT I WOULD HELP HER TO QUIT THAT COMPUTER.
I DIDN'T MAKE ANY OTHER PROMISES.
I SAID IT BEFORE—THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DECIDE IS THE PERSON HERSELF.
FLOOOM
I DID ALL I COULD. FROM HERE ON OUT, IT'S UP TO HER.

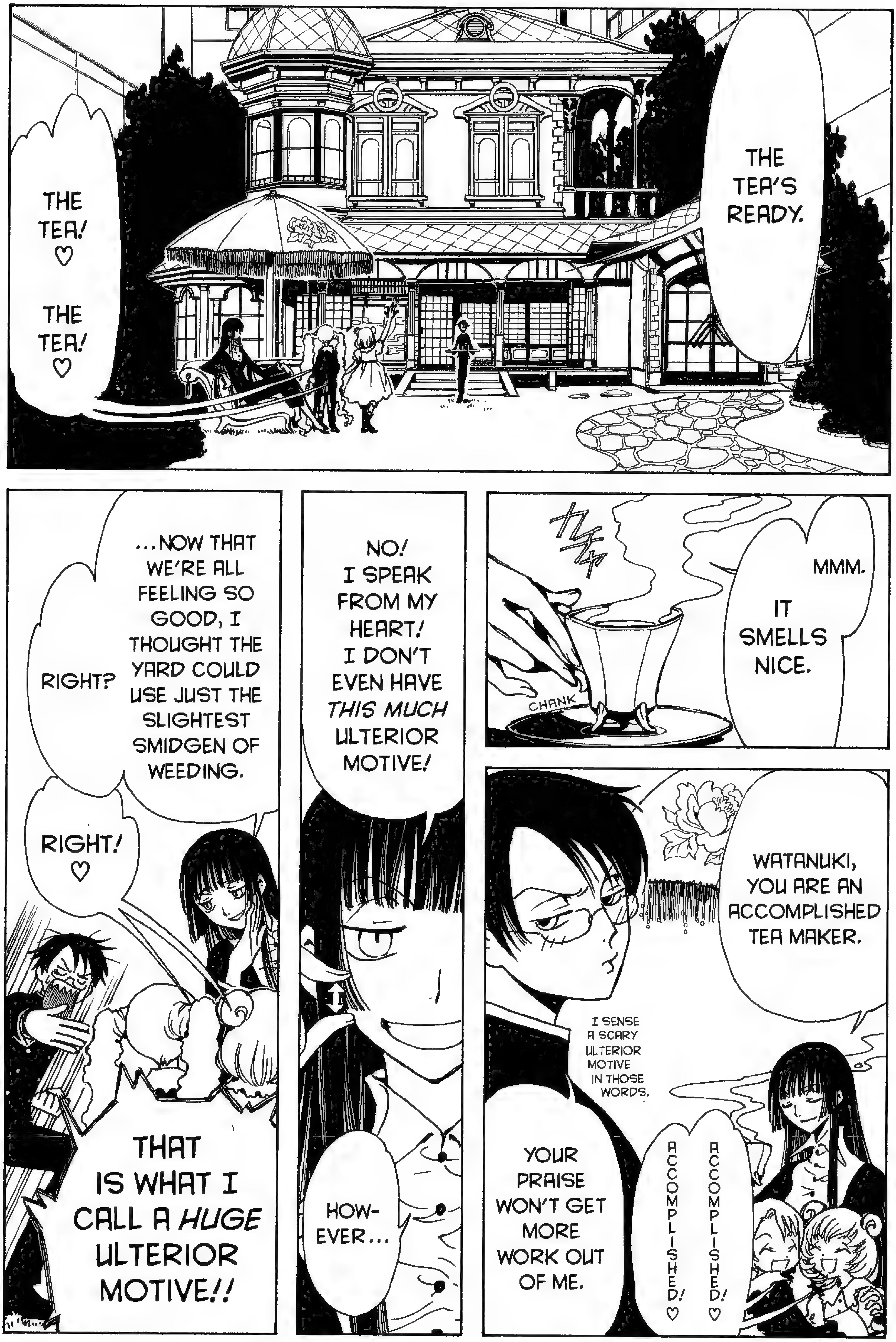

BUT IN A CASE LIKE THIS, DOESN'T THE THERAPIST USUALLY KEEP WATCH UNTIL THE PERSON IS CURED?
KEEPING WATCH OVER AN ADDICT UNTIL SHE'S CURED IS A BIT TOO MUCH SERVICE FOR THE PAYMENT OF ONE CHAIR. MY SHOP'S RATES AREN'T THAT REASONABLE.
PRIK
SOUNDS TO ME LIKE DIRTY DEALING.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
MMRFFL!
THE MORE INCREDIBLE A SERVICE I PROVIDE FOR A CUSTOMER, THE MORE THAT PERSON IS GOING TO HAVE TO PAY IN THE END!
ぐいぐいっ
GRBB
GRBB

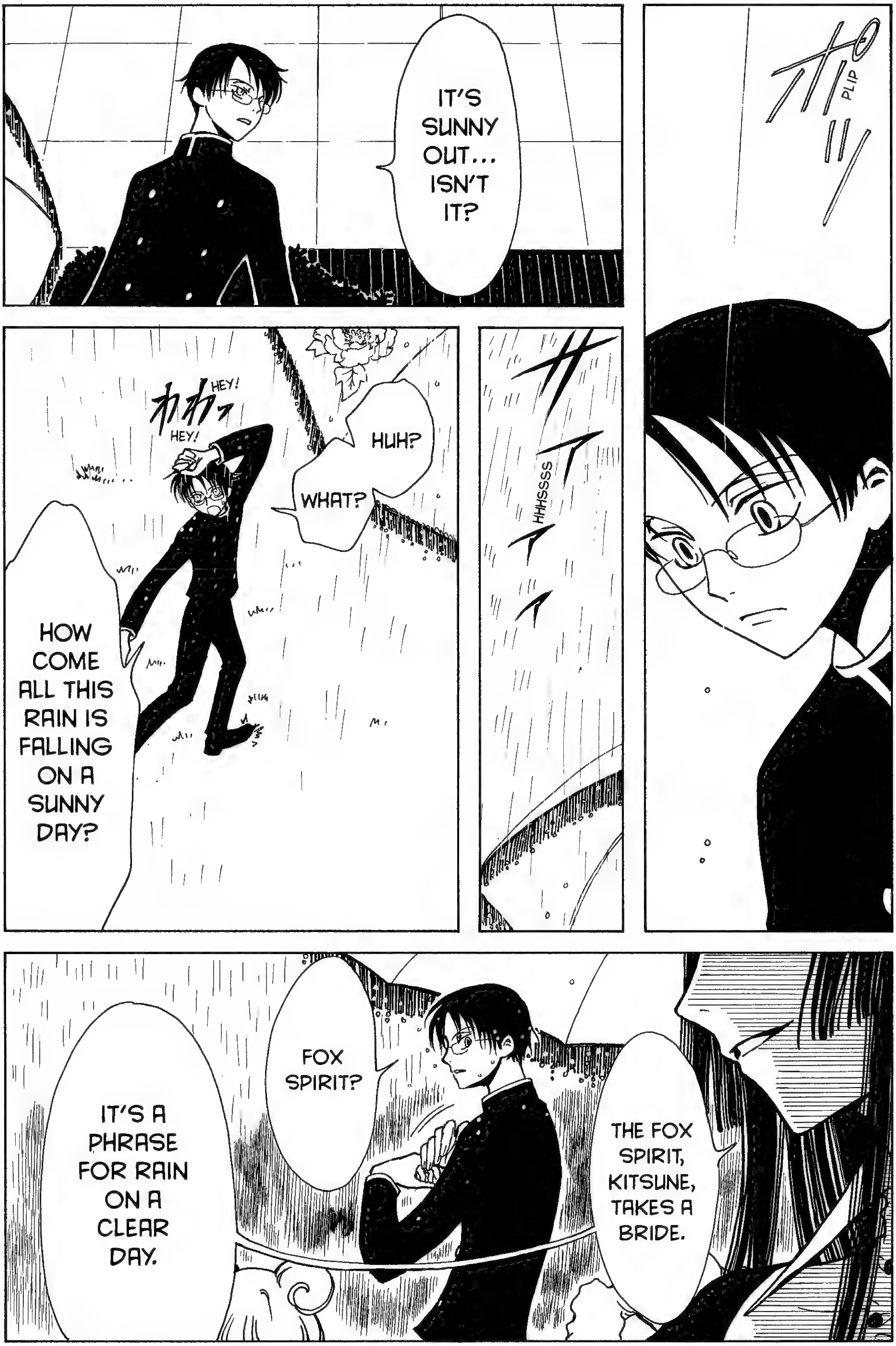

AND WITH THAT WOMAN, THE FINAL COST WOULD HAVE PROBABLY BEEN A LARGE CHUNK OF HER SOUL.
HER SOUL?
AND...
...NO MATTER WHAT LENGTHS I WOULD HAVE HAD TO GO TO, IF SHE HERSELF DOESN'T WANT TO QUIT, IT WOULD BE FOR NOTHING.
THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH THAT PEOPLE IN OUR INDUSTRY HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO.
AND THAT'S A SHAME...
...BECAUSE THERE *IS* A KIND, HARD-WORKING MEDIUM WHO WE COULD CALL.

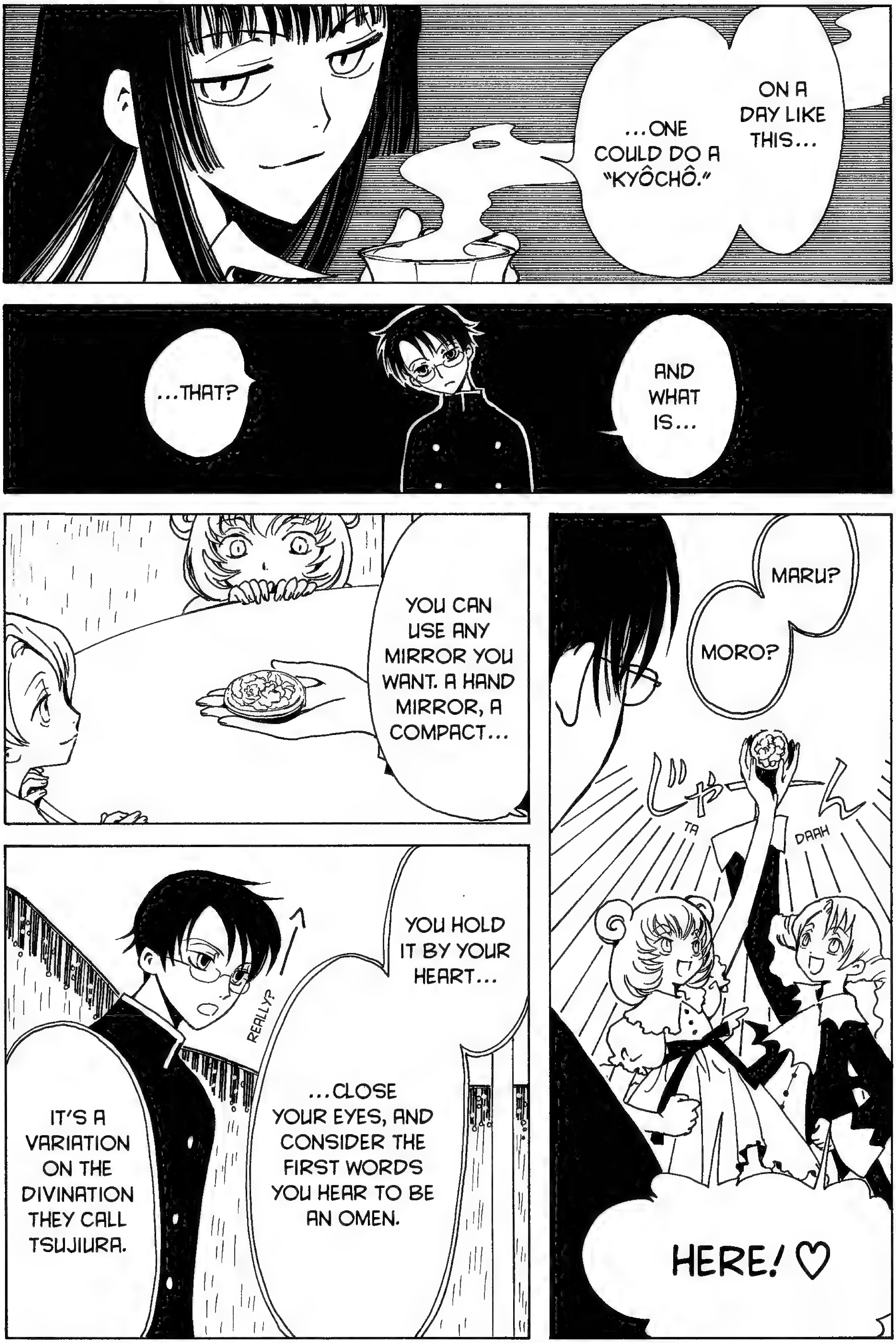

A MEDIUM?
REALLY NICE. KIND OF YOUNG.
A GUY.
BUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS TWIN SISTER IS CLOSE.
I KNEW HIM SINCE HE WAS THIS TALL.
I WISH HIM A HAPPY LIFE, BUT...
...THERE ARE A LOT OF DEFINITIONS OF HAPPINESS, I'M AFRAID.
YÛKO-SAN?


IT'S GETTING LATE. LET'S BUY GIFTS FOR MARU AND MORO AND HEAD HOME.
Z?!
EH?
AFTER ALL, WE *ARE* IN GINZA. WE SHOULD AT LEAST STOP BY KIMURA-YA AND GET SOME SWEET-BEAN BUNS.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT I'M SUPPOSED TO GO AROUND GINZA CARRYING *THESE?!*
AH HA HA HA HA!
THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER!!

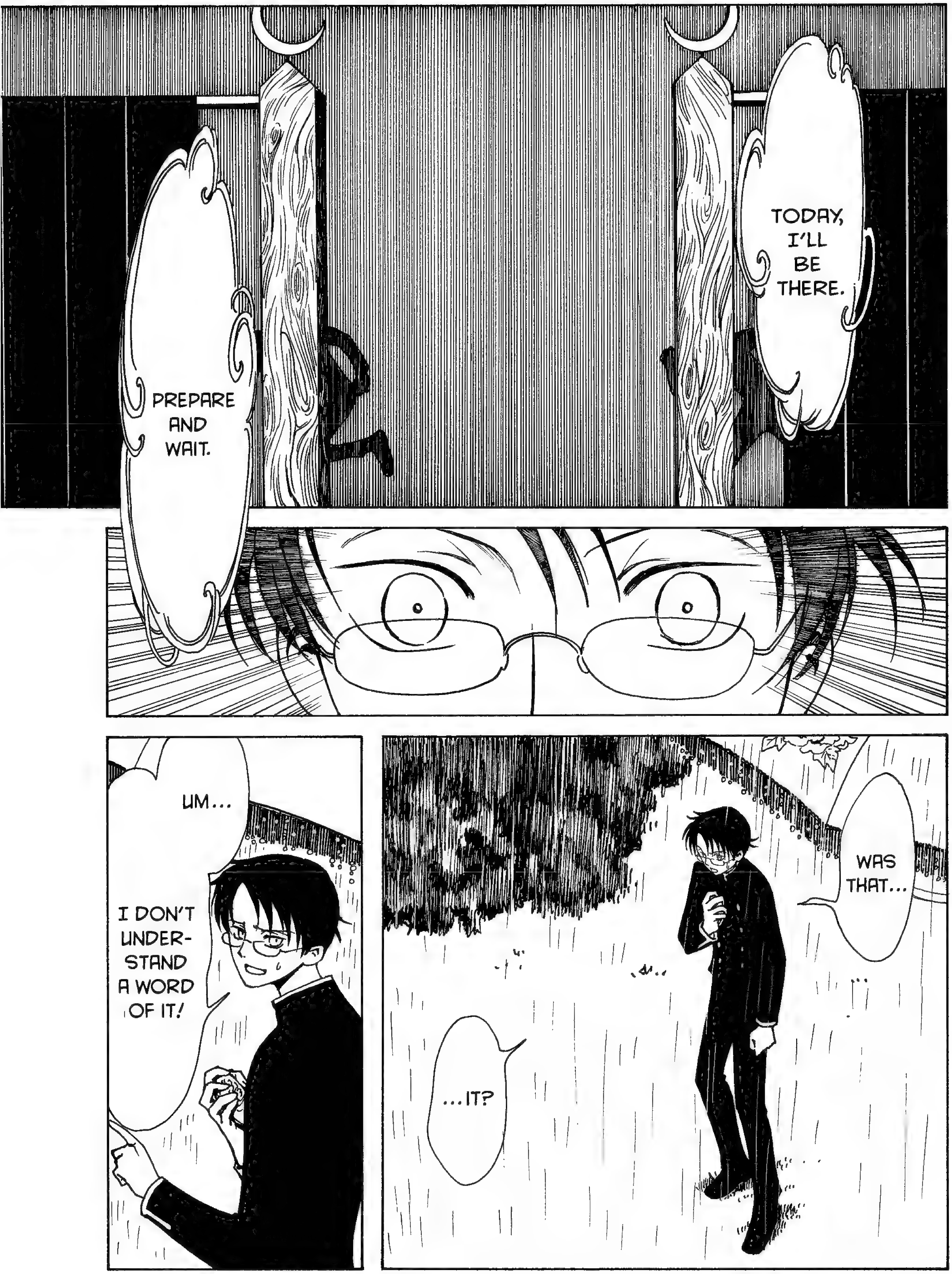
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

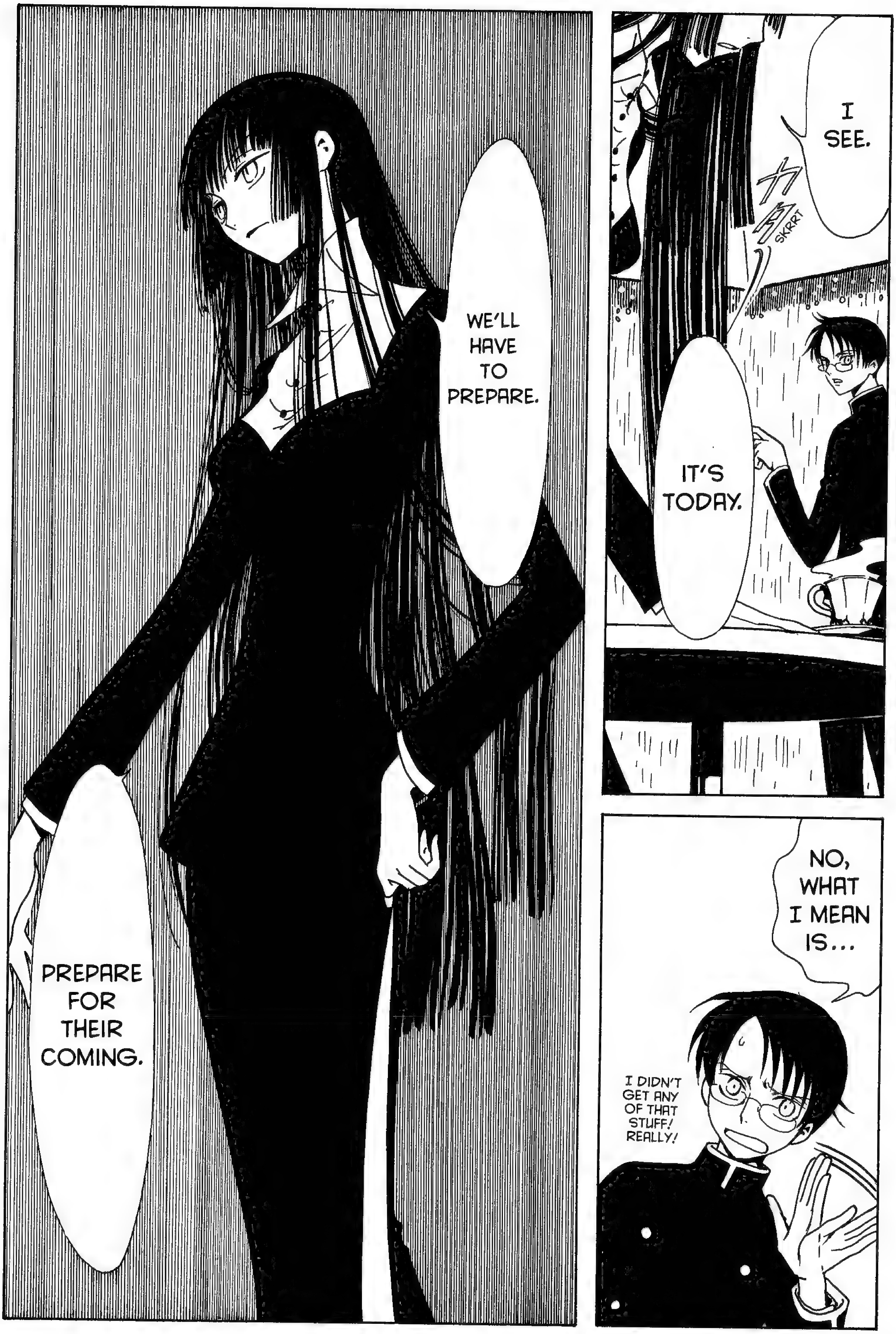

THE TEA'S READY.
THE TEA! ♡ THE TEA! ♡
カチャ
CHANK
MMM. IT SMELLS NICE.
WATANUKI, YOU ARE AN ACCOMPLISHED TEA MAKER.
I SENSE A SCARY ULTERIOR MOTIVE IN THOSE WORDS.
ACCOMPLISHED! ♡
ACCOMPLISHED! ♡
YOUR PRAISE WON'T GET MORE WORK OUT OF ME.
NO! I SPEAK FROM MY HEART! I DON'T EVEN HAVE *THIS MUCH* ULTERIOR MOTIVE!
HOW-EVER...
...NOW THAT WE'RE ALL FEELING SO GOOD, I THOUGHT THE YARD COULD USE JUST THE SLIGHTEST SMIDGEN OF WEEDING.
RIGHT?
RIGHT! ♡
THAT IS WHAT I CALL A *HUGE* ULTERIOR MOTIVE!!

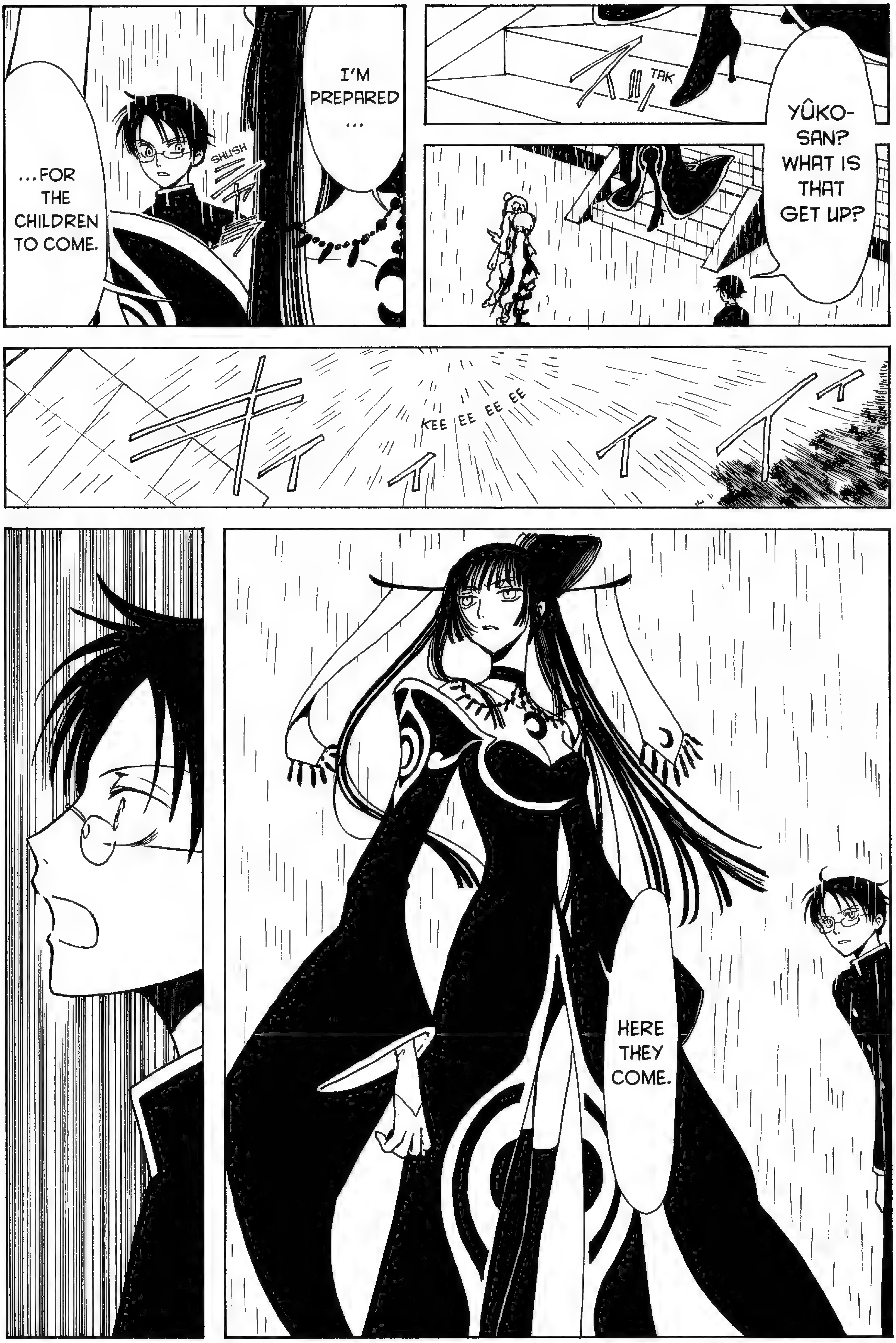

PLIP
IT'S SUNNY OUT… ISN'T IT?
HHHSSSS
HEY!
HEY!
HUH?
WHAT?
HOW COME ALL THIS RAIN IS FALLING ON A SUNNY DAY?
THE FOX SPIRIT, KITSUNE, TAKES A BRIDE.
FOX SPIRIT?
IT'S A PHRASE FOR RAIN ON A CLEAR DAY.

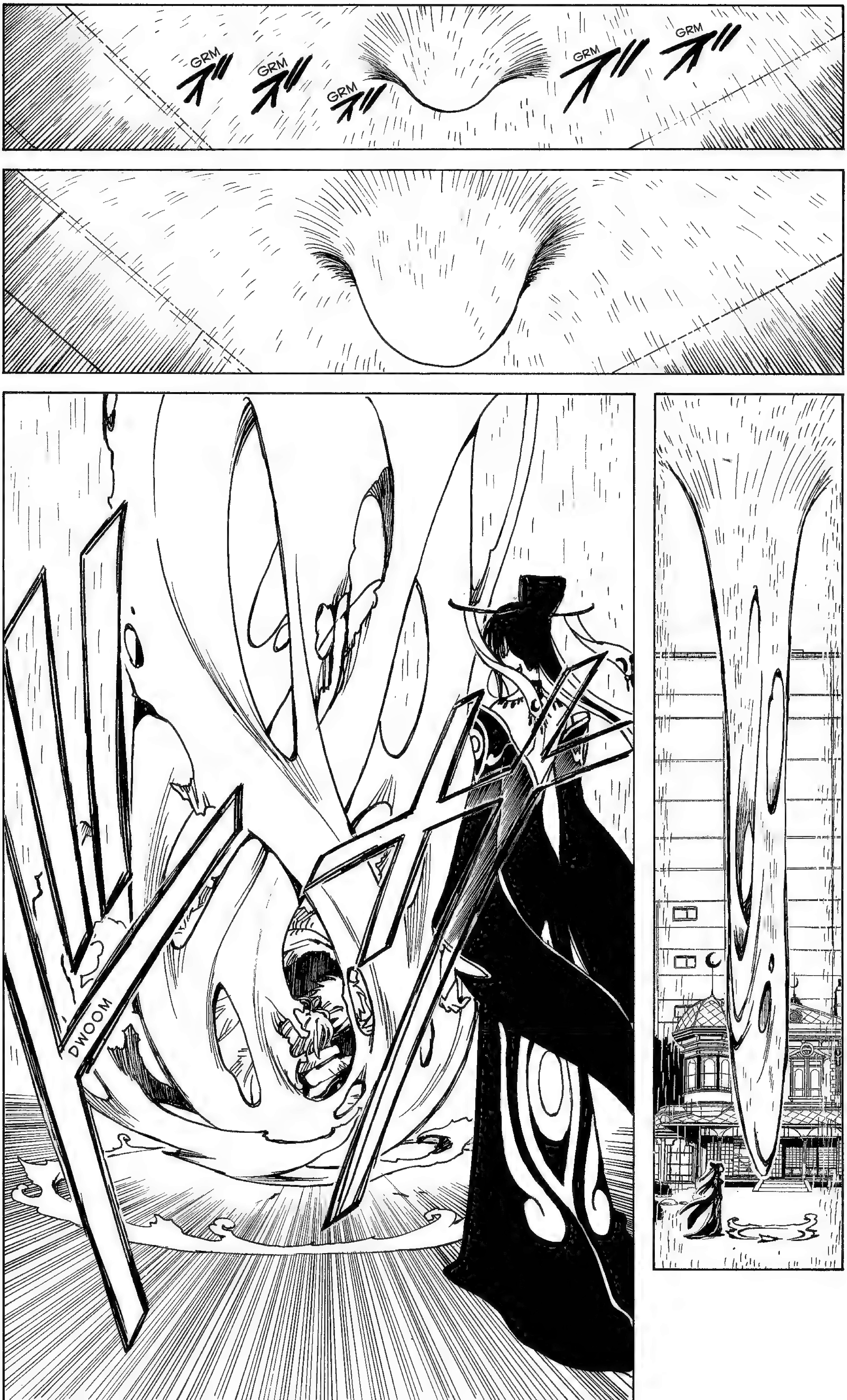

ON A DAY LIKE THIS...
...ONE COULD DO A "KYÔCHÔ."
AND WHAT IS...
...THAT?
MARU?
MORO?
じゃーん
TA DAAH
HERE! ♡
YOU CAN USE ANY MIRROR YOU WANT. A HAND MIRROR, A COMPACT...
YOU HOLD IT BY YOUR HEART...
...CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND CONSIDER THE FIRST WORDS YOU HEAR TO BE AN OMEN.
REALLY?
IT'S A VARIATION ON THE DIVINATION THEY CALL TSUJIURA.

IN TSUJIURA, YOU PUT A MIRROR TO YOUR HEART, WALK DOWN A PATH, AND TAKE THE FIRST THING YOU HEAR AS AN OMEN.
TRY IT IF YOU LIKE.
ON A DAY WHERE THE FOX SPIRIT TAKES A BRIDE, THE SUN-DRENCHED RAIN ADDS POWER TO A KYÔCHÔ DIVINATION AND INCREASES ITS ACCURACY.
WHAT YOU GET IS AN OMEN THAT IS ALMOST A CERTAINTY.
SST
WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY?
CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND OPEN YOUR EARS.
YOU NEEDN'T CONCENTRATE OR EVEN THINK.
JUST LISTEN FOR THE FIRST SOUND YOU HEAR.


TODAY, I'LL BE THERE.
PREPARE AND WAIT.
WAS THAT...
...IT?
UM...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND A WORD OF IT!


I SEE.
SKRRT
IT'S TODAY.
NO, WHAT I MEAN IS…
I DIDN'T GET ANY OF THAT STUFF! REALLY!
WE'LL HAVE TO PREPARE.
PREPARE FOR THEIR COMING.


TAK
YÛKO-SAN? WHAT IS THAT GET UP?
SHUSH
I'M PREPARED ...
...FOR THE CHILDREN TO COME.
KEE EE EE EE
HERE THEY COME.


GRM
ズ
GRM
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GRM
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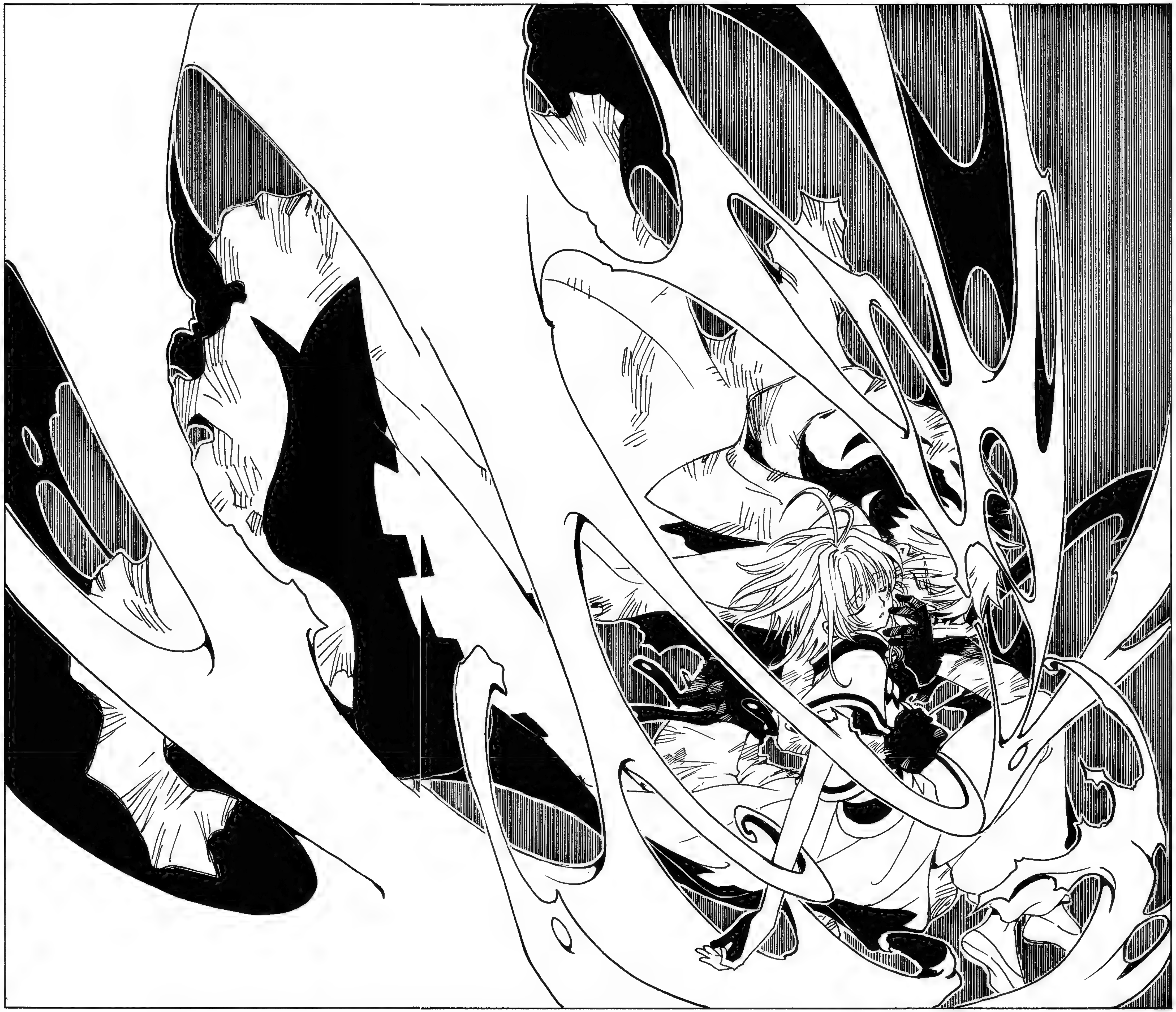
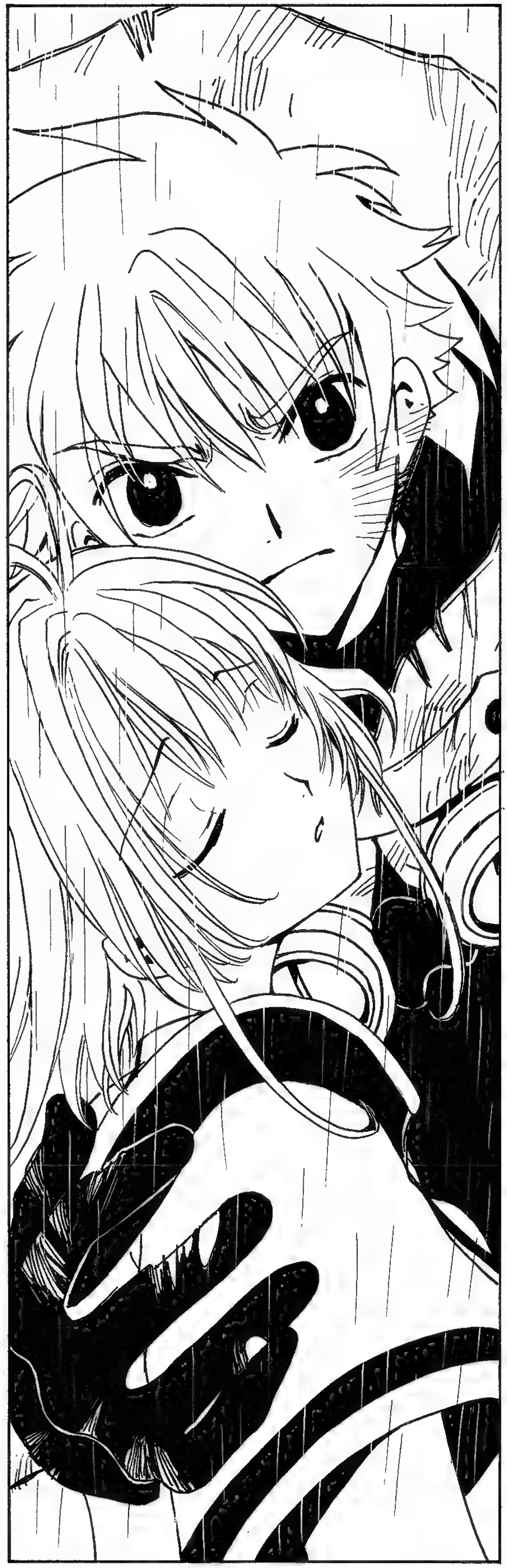
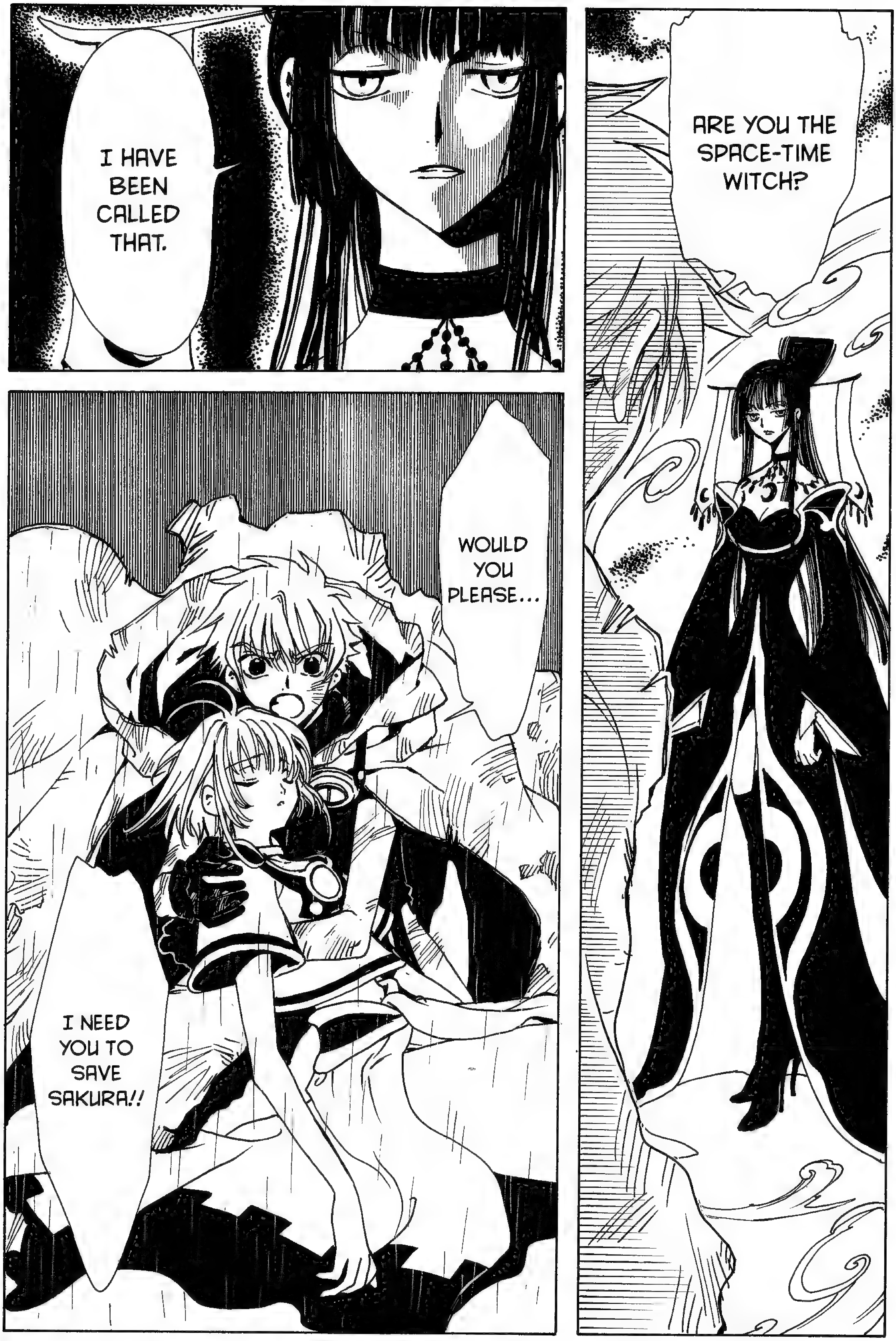
GRM
ズ
GRM
ズ
DWOOM






ARE YOU THE SPACE-TIME WITCH?
I HAVE BEEN CALLED THAT.
WOULD YOU PLEASE...
I NEED YOU TO SAVE SAKURA!!

Past Works

CLAMP have created many series. Here is a brief overview of one of them.

Cardcaptor Sakura: Master of the Clow

The first volume of *Cardcaptor Sakura* was released in Japan in 1996, and by the time the series was finished it would number twelve volumes in all. The first story arc, wherein Sakura would capture all of the Clow Cards and be named Master of the Clow, encompassed the first six volumes. In the final six volumes, Sakura discovers that there is another type of magic beyond that represented by the Clow Cards, and she must tap an inner power she didn't know she had in order to combat it. In Japan, there were twelve volumes all called *Cardcaptor Sakura*; in America, the second six have been released as *Cardcaptor Sakura: Master of the Clow*.

Romance abounds in this second arc, with Sakura still trying to manage her serious crush on Yukito, and Li Syaoran and new transfer student Eriol Hirragizawa both showing interest in Sakura. When Eriol turns out to be the reincarnation of the wizard Clow Reed, creator of the cards that bear his name, a series of magical tests begin for Sakura, whose purpose becomes apparent only later in the series.

In fact, romance is what it's all about in the closing chapter of the series. Sakura confesses her love for Yukito, only to have Yukito deny her, because he's in love with her older brother Tôya! You'll see the possibility that this love still exists in *Tsubasa*. Eriol finds his true love, Kaho, and Li Syaoran finally finds the courage to tell Sakura how he really feels.

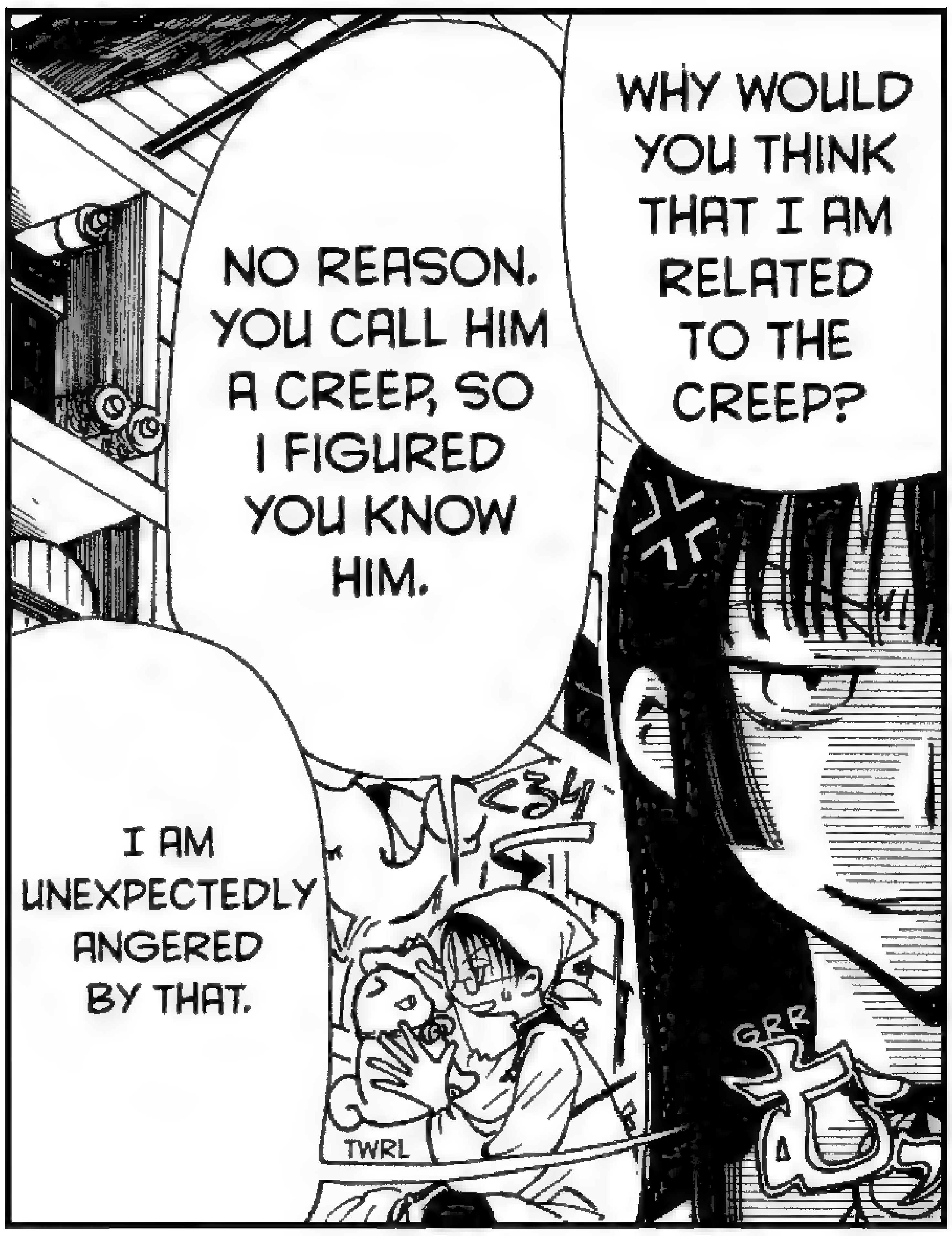
Clearly, CLAMP felt very close to these characters and wanted to go on telling their stories—which they have done in the pages of *Tsubasa*, and, to a lesser extent, in *xxxHOLiC*!

Artifacts and Miscellany

Over in *Tsubasa* you'll find a lot of characters from a variety of CLAMP manga making an appearance. Here in the first volume of *xxxHOLiC*, you'll find a few artifacts and other appearances that might be a bit hard to understand if you haven't read all of CLAMP's work. Don't read these if you haven't read this volume yet—there's a reason we put them at the end of the book!

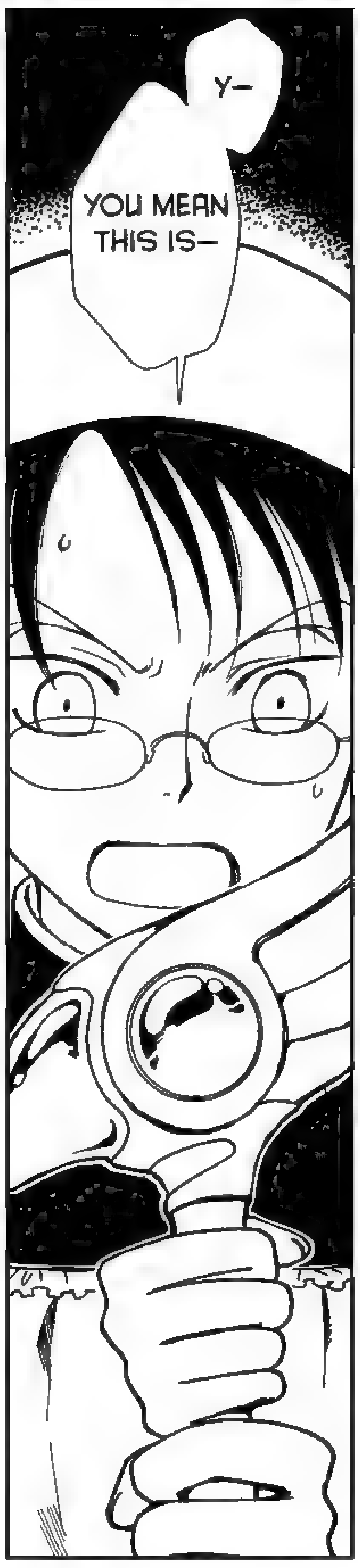
Maneki Neko

Maneki Neko is not a CLAMP character, but rather a Japanese symbol of good fortune which is very common in that country. When you buy one of these figurines, the arm is usually moving back and forth in a manner that looks to western eyes as though it is waving. In fact, it is actually beckoning in the Japanese manner—by waving its hand with the palm outward. The legend of Maneki Neko is that a man in a thunderstorm took refuge under a tree, only to see a cat beckoning him into a nearby temple. Following the cat, the man turned to watch the tree struck by lightning. Maneki Neko became the symbol of good luck ever after.


WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT I AM RELATED TO THE CREEP?
NO REASON. YOU CALL HIM A CREEP, SO I FIGURED YOU KNOW HIM.
GRR
I AM UNEXPECTEDLY ANGERED BY THAT.
TWRL

Sakura's Wand

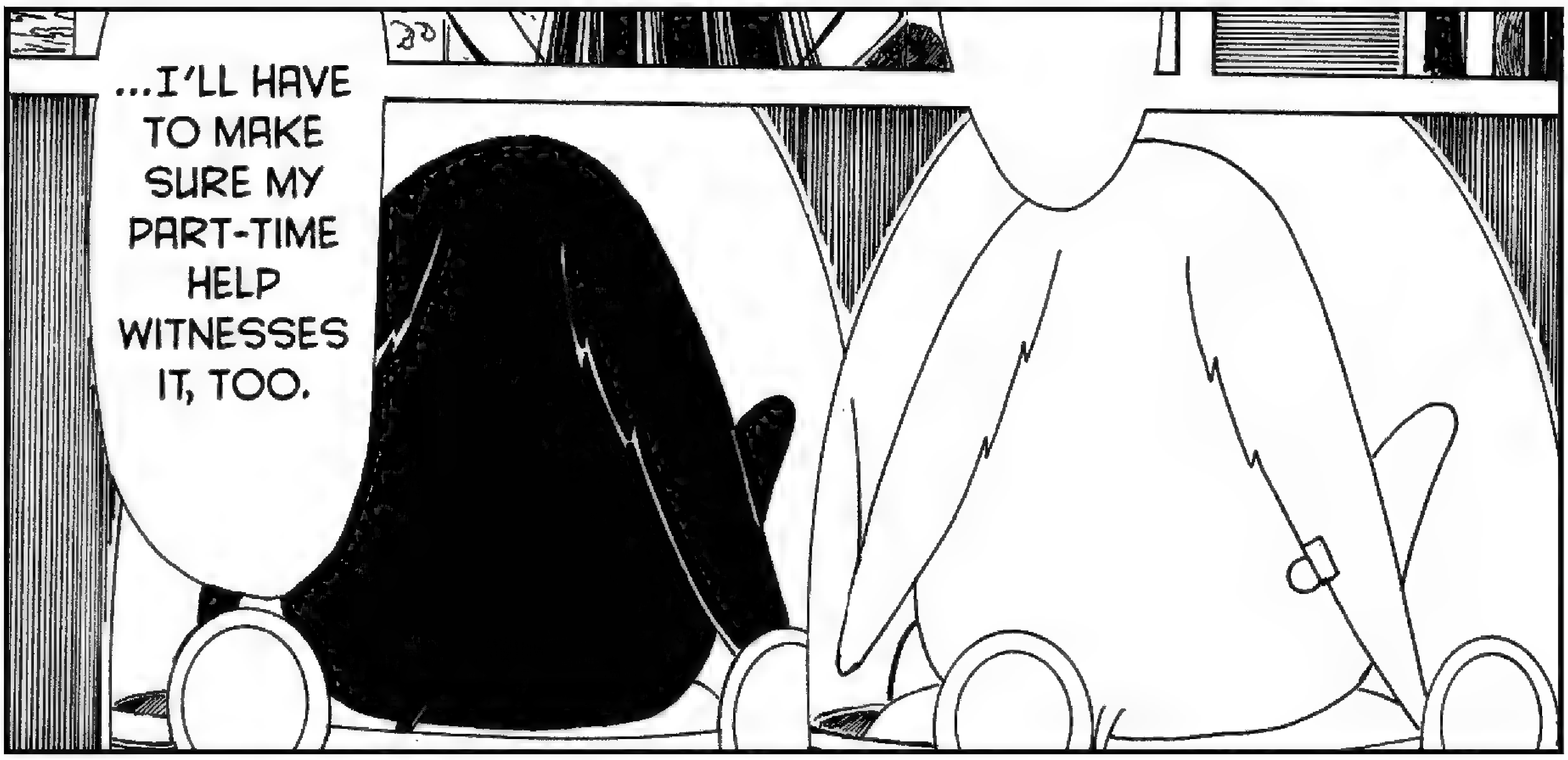
Foreshadowing an event to come in *Tsubasa* Volume 1 and *xxxHOLiC* Volume 2, Watanuki finds an old wand while dusting Yûko's shop. Yûko builds the tension up to the big reveal: It's just a plastic toy wand. But here's the weird thing—Watanuki clearly recognizes it! Is it part of some legend he grew up with? Or does he just watch *Cardcaptor Sakura* on television? It may be revealed in a future volume...or we may never know!



Mokona Modoki

Readers of *Magic Knight Rayearth* will recognize the chubby bunny thing called Mokona. In both the manga and the anime, Mokona exists to guide the Magic Knights through their quests. In the manga, however, his role is a little, shall we say, *expanded*. Mokona is named for Mokona Apapa, a member of CLAMP, and his vocabulary consists entirely of the word "PU!"

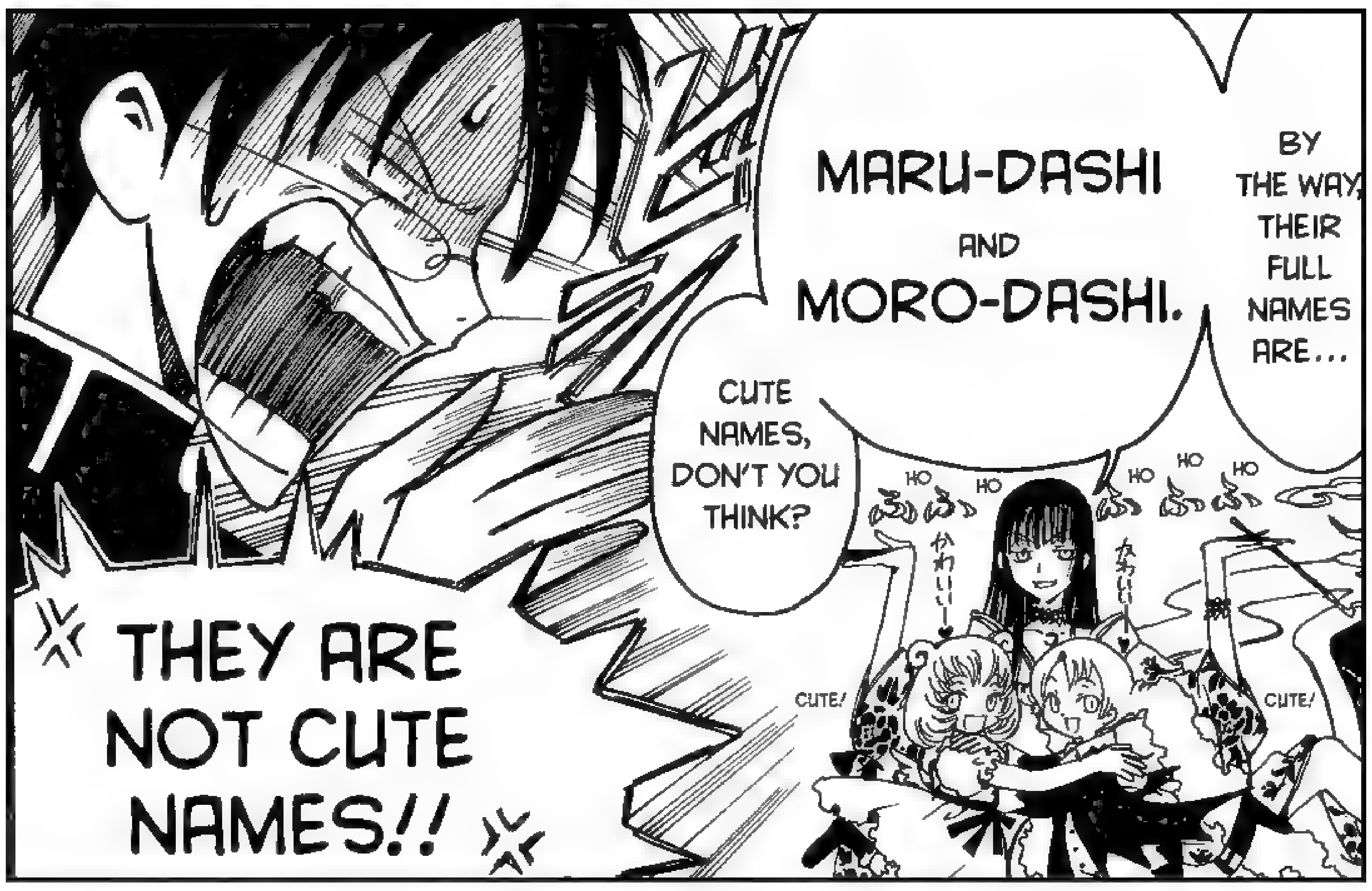
As will become clear in *Tsubasa* Volume 1 and future volumes of *xxxHOLiC*, this is definitely not the same Mokona, although there are a lot of similarities.


...I'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE MY PART-TIME HELP WITNESSES IT, TOO.

Translation Notes

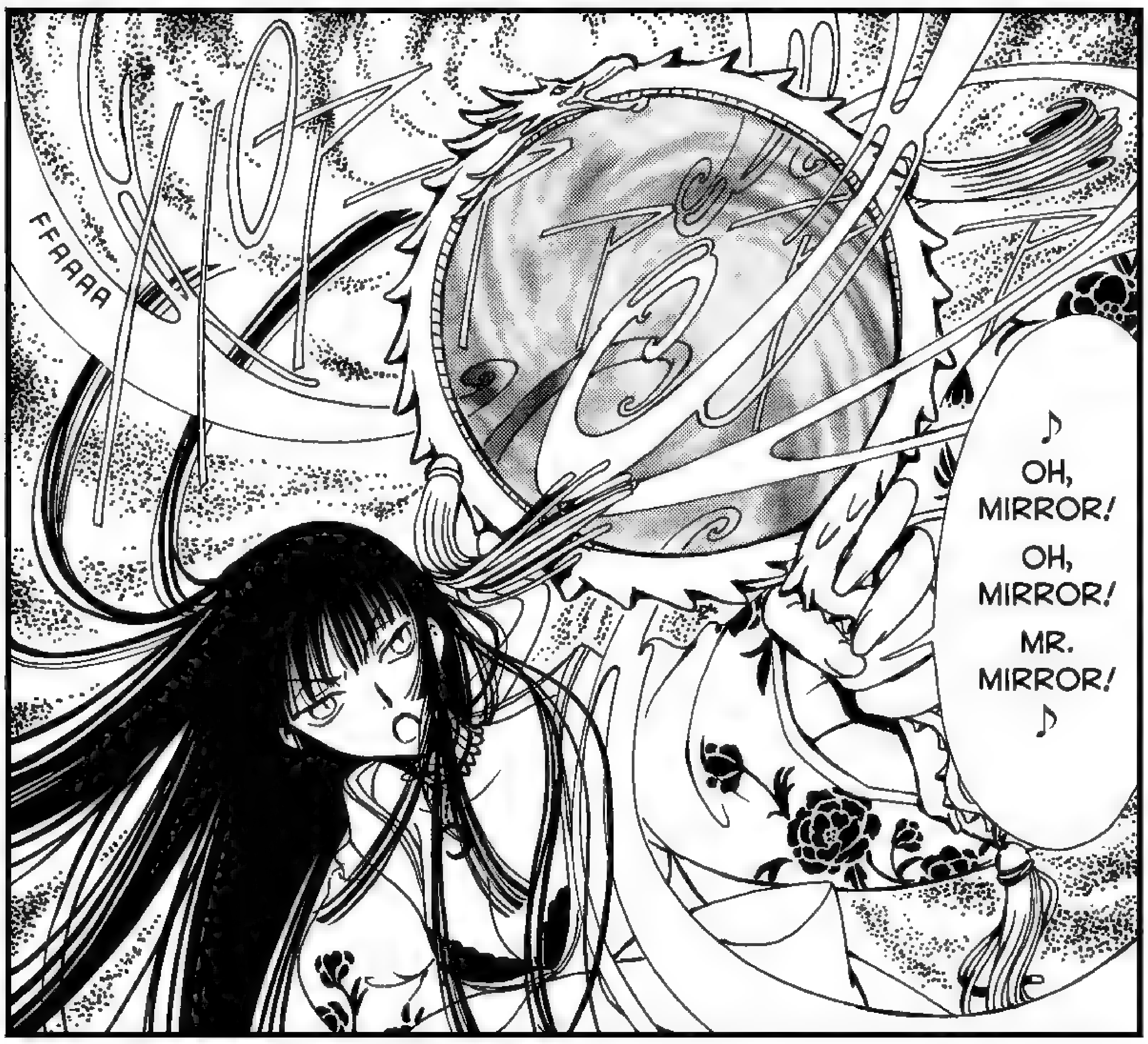
For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes to help understand some of the cultural and story references from our translation of *xxxHOLiC*.

Maru-dashi and Moro-dashi

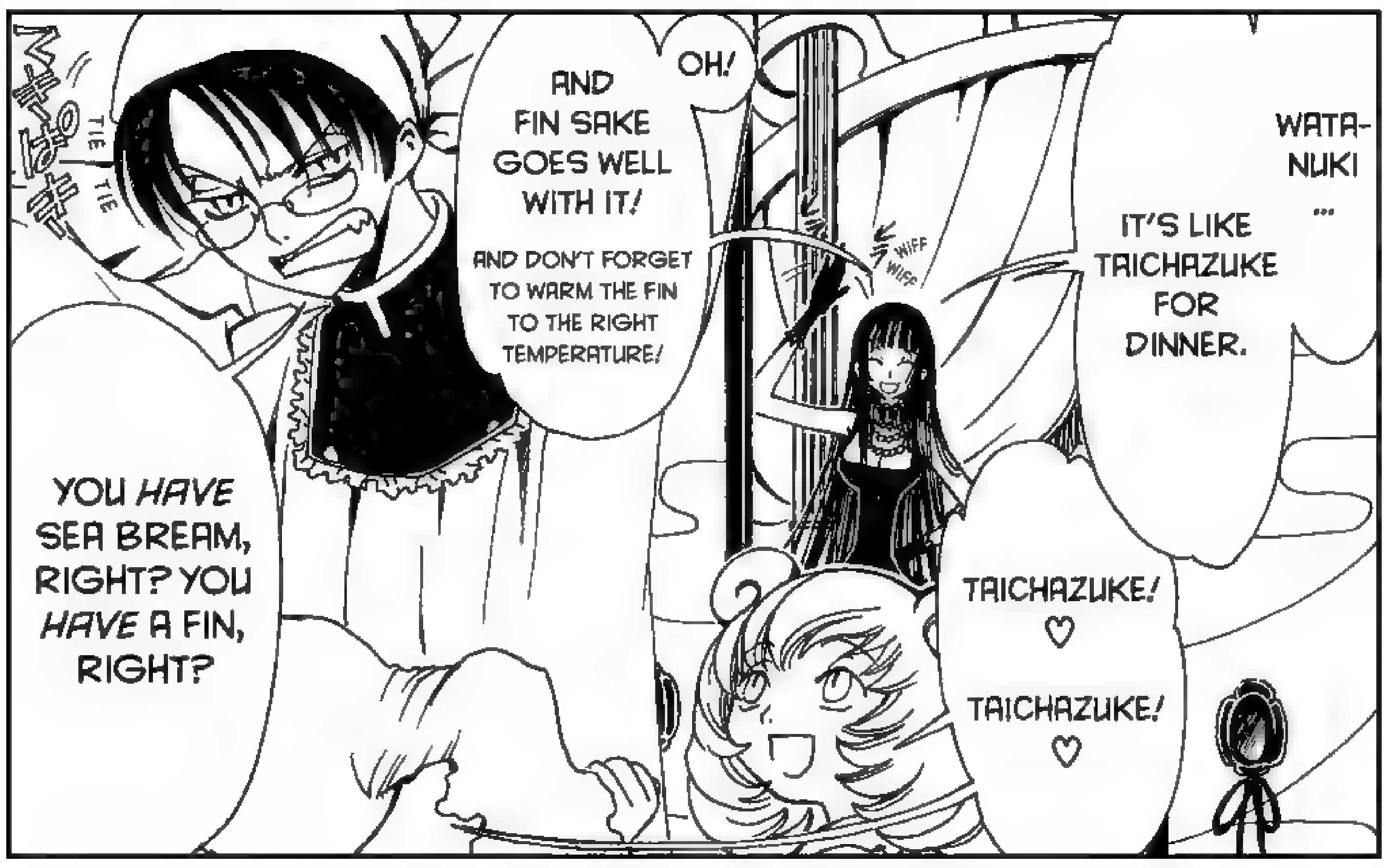

BY THE WAY, THEIR FULL NAMES ARE...
MARU-DASHI AND MORO-DASHI.
CUTE NAMES, DON'T YOU THINK?
HO HO
HO HO HO
CUTE!
CUTE!
THEY ARE NOT CUTE NAMES!!

Maru and Moro are very common syllables found in Japanese names. Watanuki Kimihiro had no reason to assume that their names were the buildup to a joke. But he is absolutely right—they aren't cute names! Both *marudashi* and *morodashi* mean "exposing yourself in public." It's almost as if Yûko has decided to call her two assistants "Streaking" and "Flashing."

Oh, Mirror! Oh, Mirror! Mr. Mirror!


FFAAAA
♪ OH, MIRROR! OH, MIRROR! MR. MIRROR! ♪

In the 1970s, there was an American television show for very young children called *Romper Room* in which the host looked at the audience through an empty mirror frame and said, "I see Tommy, and Anne, and Carol, and...etc." Of course, she was listing common names, and those with uncommon names were fated to never be "seen" by the host. Japan's version of *Romper Room* had exactly the same sequence, although the song was a little different (which Maru and Moro sing for us). Do you remember *Romper Room*? No? That's the generation gap for you.


WATANUKI...
IT'S LIKE TAICHAZUKE FOR DINNER.
OH!
AND FIN SAKE GOES WELL WITH IT!
AND DON'T FORGET TO WARM THE FIN TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE!
WIFF WIFF
TAICHAZUKE! ♡
TAICHAZUKE! ♡
YOU *HAVE* SEA BREAM, RIGHT? YOU *HAVE* A FIN, RIGHT?
TIE TIE

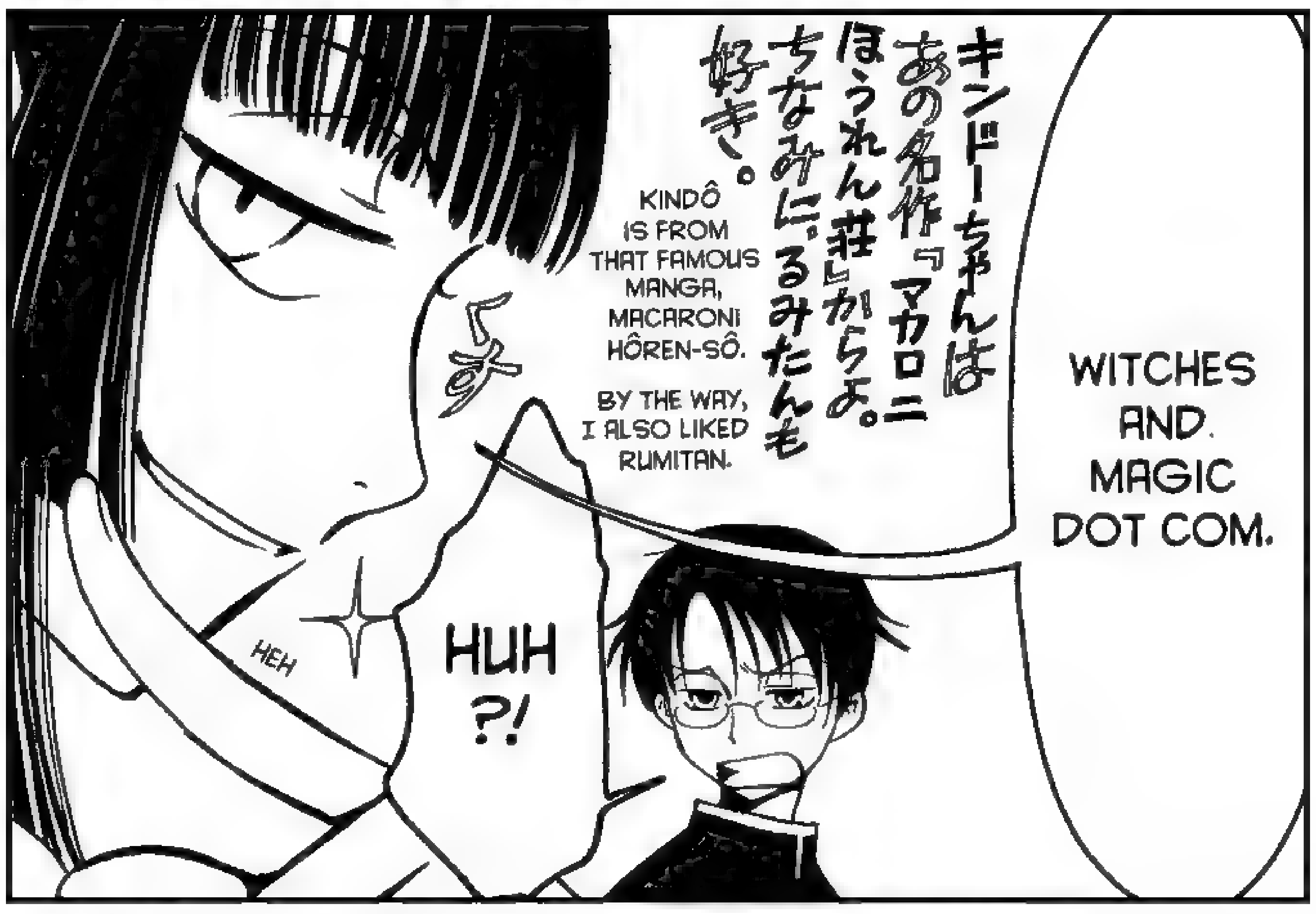
Taichazuke and Hire Sake

Taichazuke is boiled rice poured with tea, and sea bream on top, while hire sake is fin sake.

EKI-KYABE, YOU SAY?
LET'S SEE...
HUH?

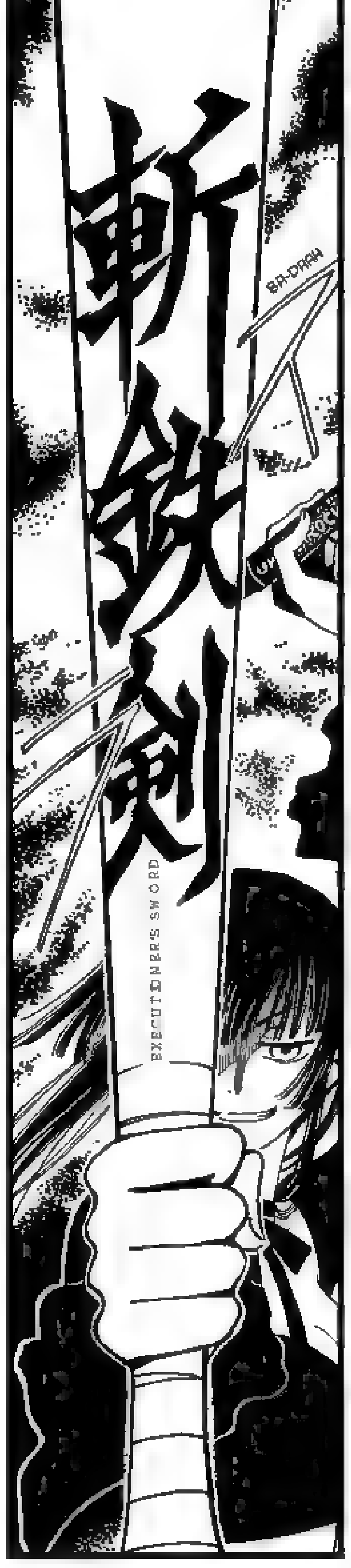
Eki-Kyabe

A medication for indigestion, commonly used as a cure for hangovers.


WITCHES AND MAGIC DOT COM.
キンドーちゃんはあの名作『マカロニほうれん荘』からよ。ちなみに。るみたんも好き。
KINDÔ IS FROM THAT FAMOUS MANGA, MACARONI HÔREN-SÔ.
BY THE WAY, I ALSO LIKED RUMITAN.
HUH ?!
HEH

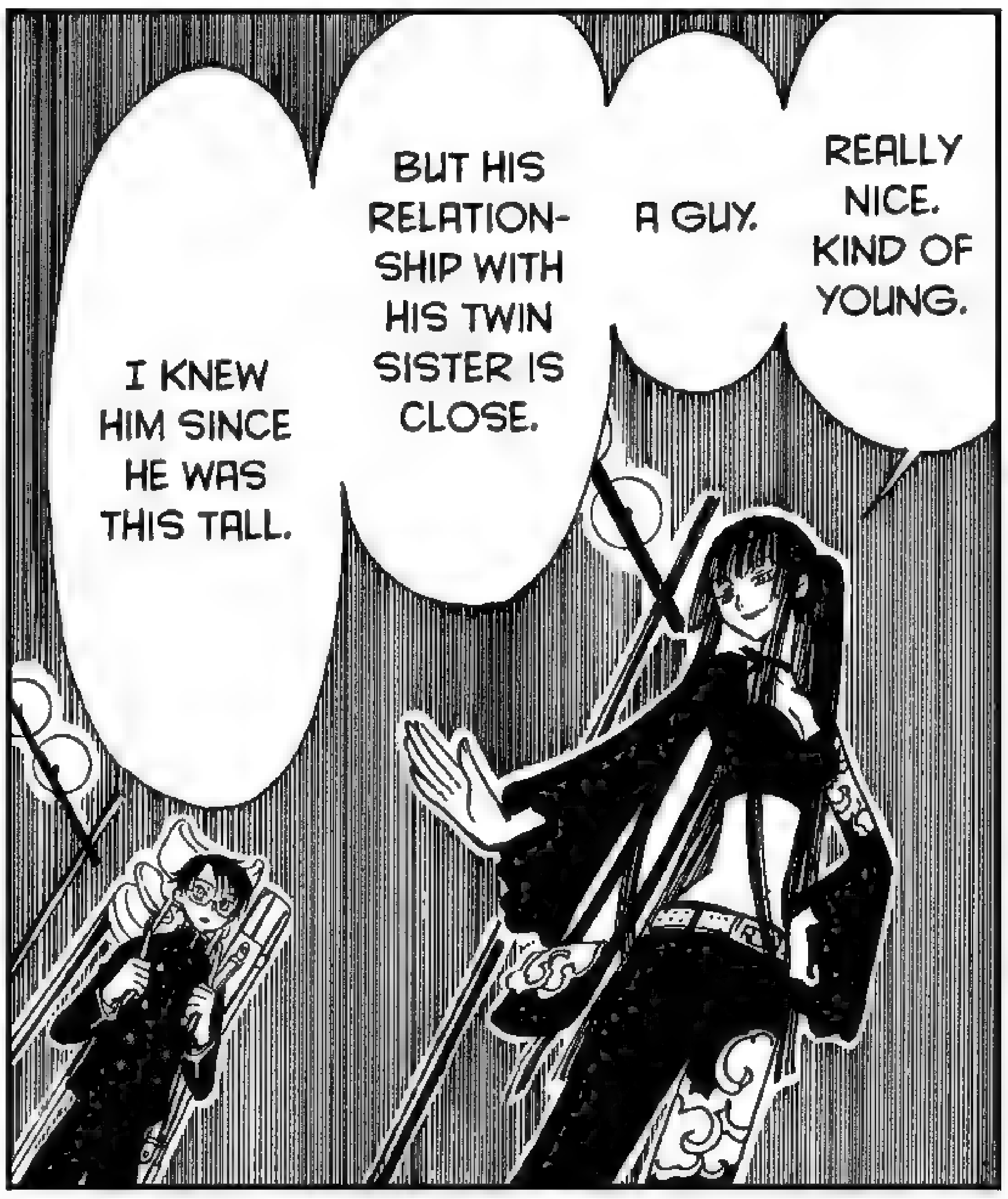
Macaroni Hôren-so

A comedy manga that started in 1977 and ran for nine volumes in its original release. It is about a young, poor businessman who lives, along with several odd characters, in a *gejuku*, an old-style apartment building, by the name of *Hôren-so*. Although it ran in *Shonen Champion* for only a little over two years, it is one of the seminal comedies of Japanese manga.


斬鉄剣
BA-DAAH
EXECUTIONER'S SWORD

Zantetsuken

The Sword That Cuts Iron is the legendary sword of equally legendary thief Goemon Ishikawa. If that name seems familiar, then you have some experience with the comedy/action series *Lupin III* by Monkey Punch. *Lupin*'s Goemon is supposed to be a direct descendant, and his sword also cuts iron—and much, much more. The famous phrase, "Once again, I cut a worthless object" (page 156) is also taken from Goemon's character.

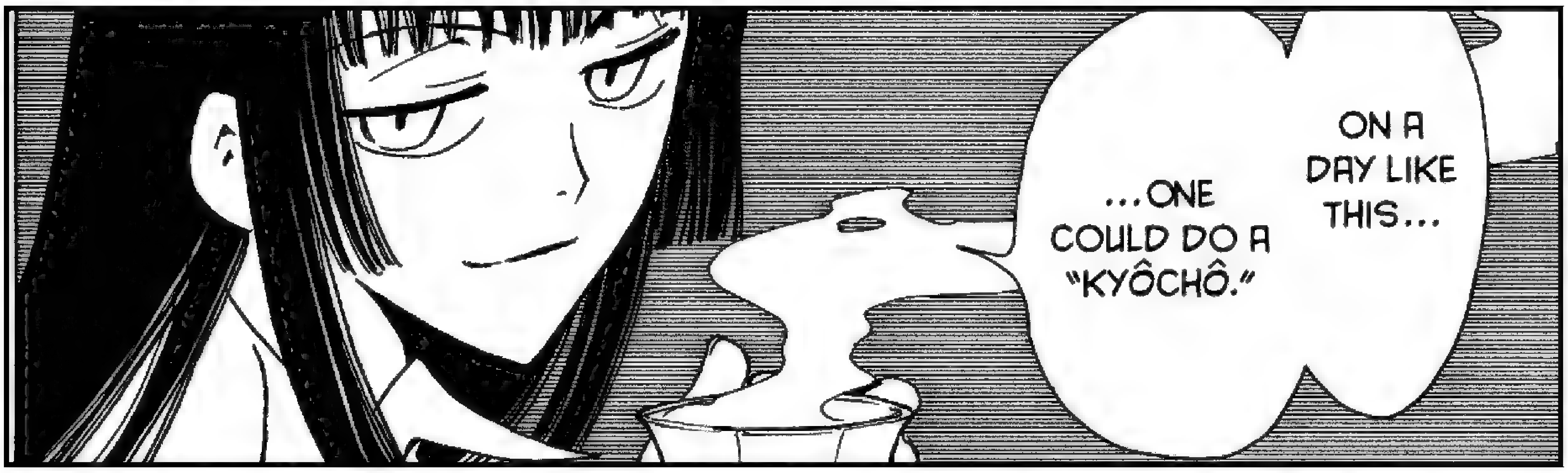

REALLY NICE. KIND OF YOUNG.
A GUY.
BUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS TWIN SISTER IS CLOSE.
I KNEW HIM SINCE HE WAS THIS TALL.

The Medium

She's talking about Subaru Sumeragi of X (*X/1999*) and *Tokyo Babylon*. The direct descendant of the nation's highest family of mediums, Subaru was one of a pair of fraternal twins—the other being his irrepressible sister Hokuto.

Kyôchô

The word is made up of the characters for "mirror" and "divination."


ON A DAY LIKE THIS...
...ONE COULD DO A "KYÔCHÔ."

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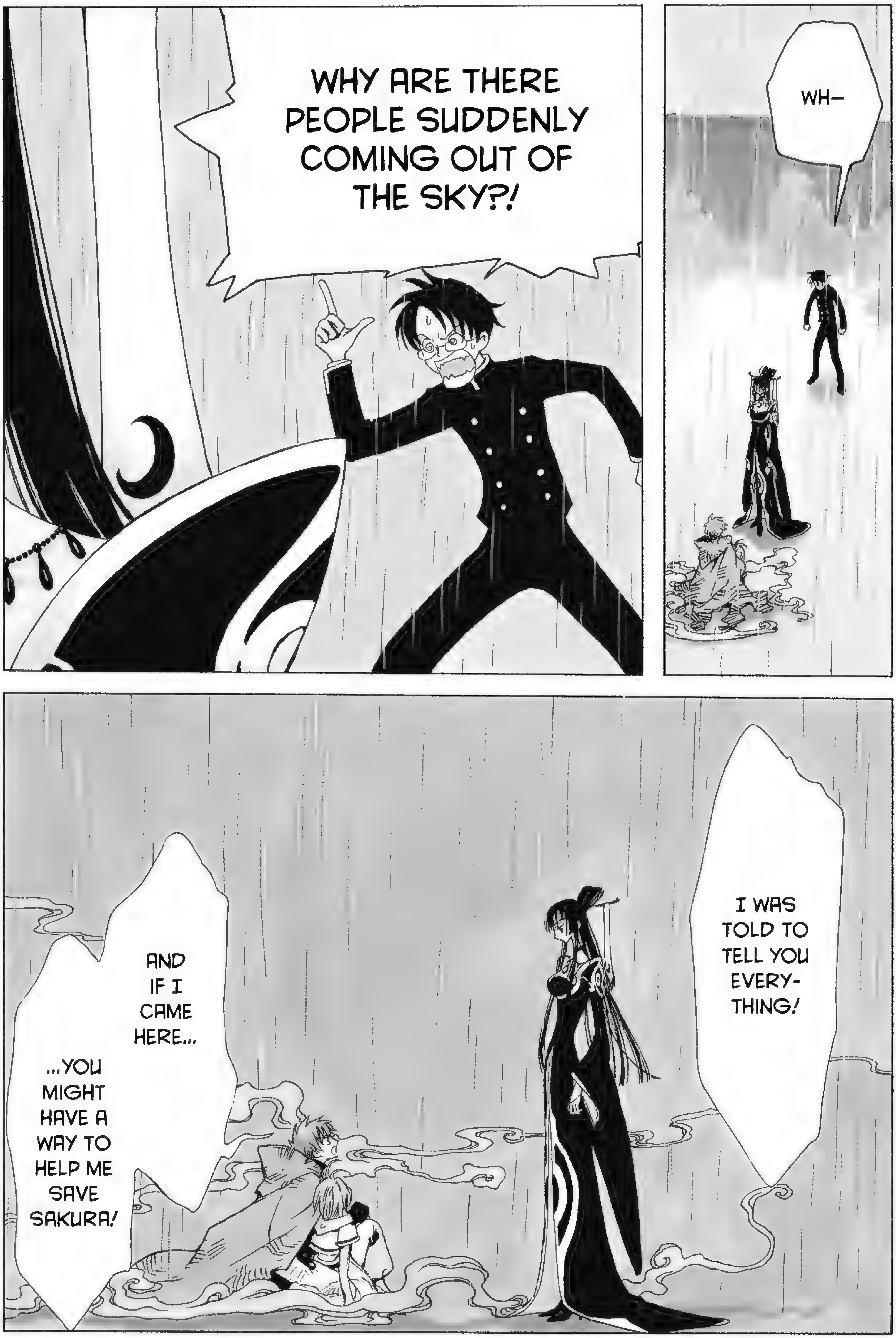
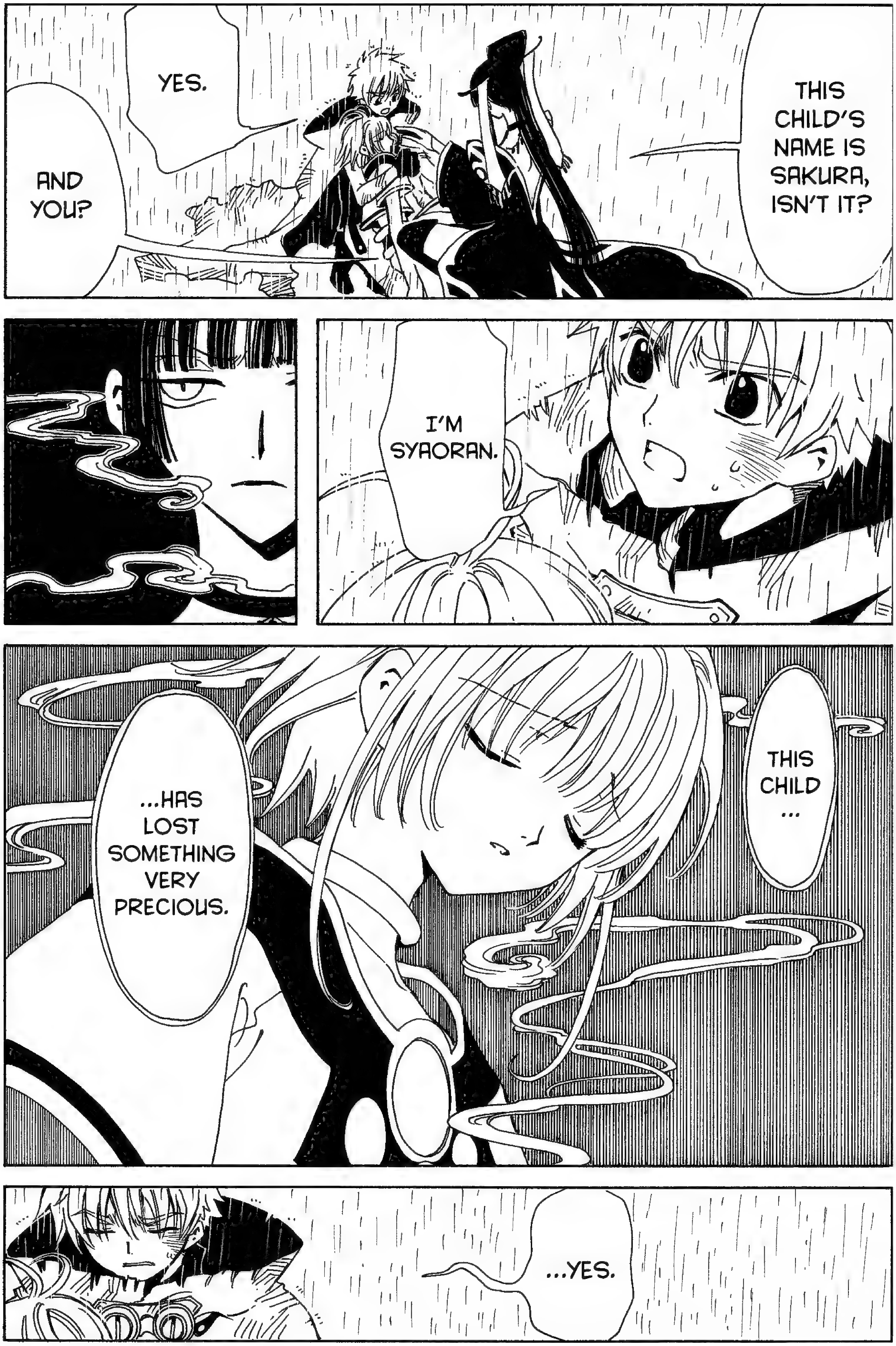
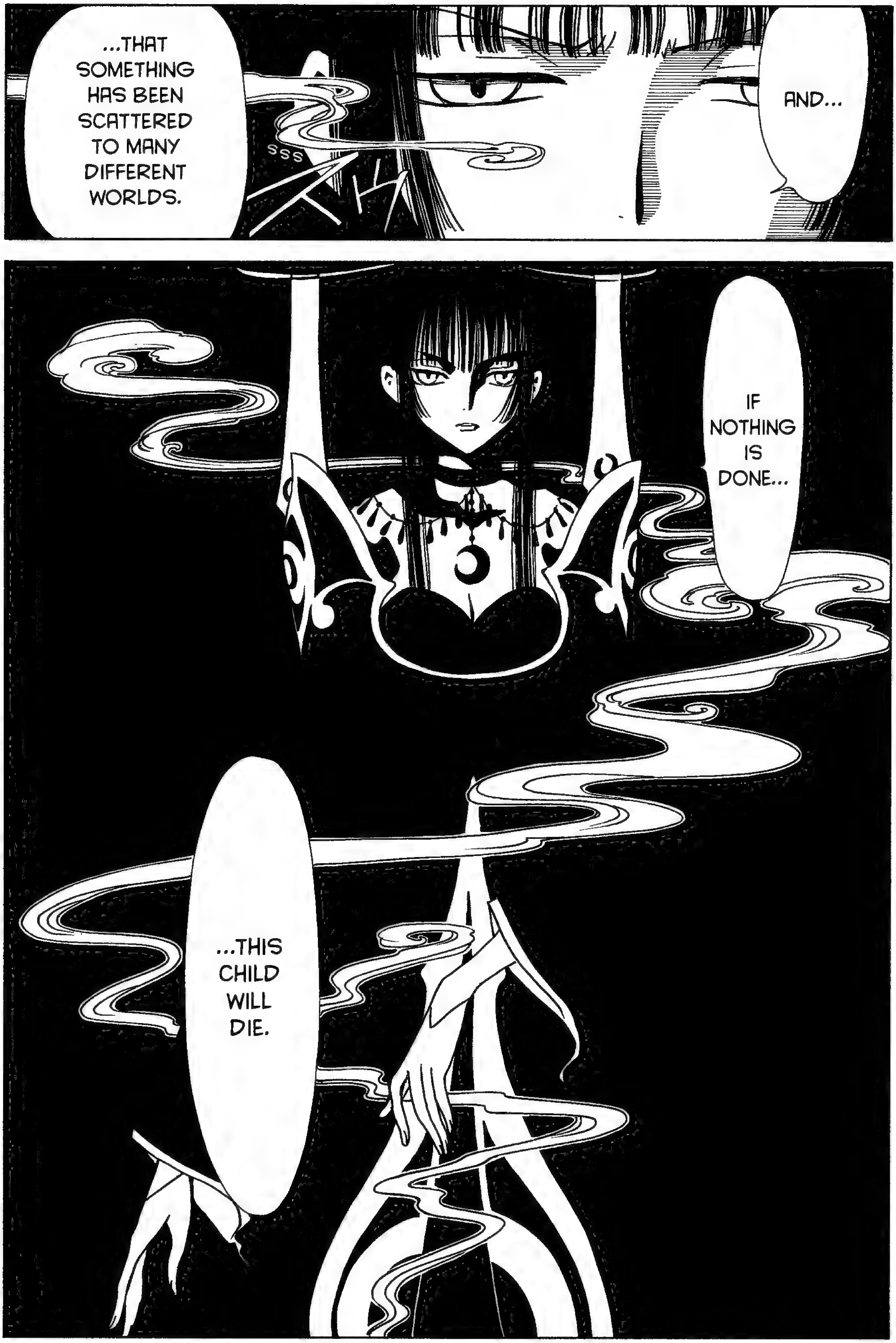
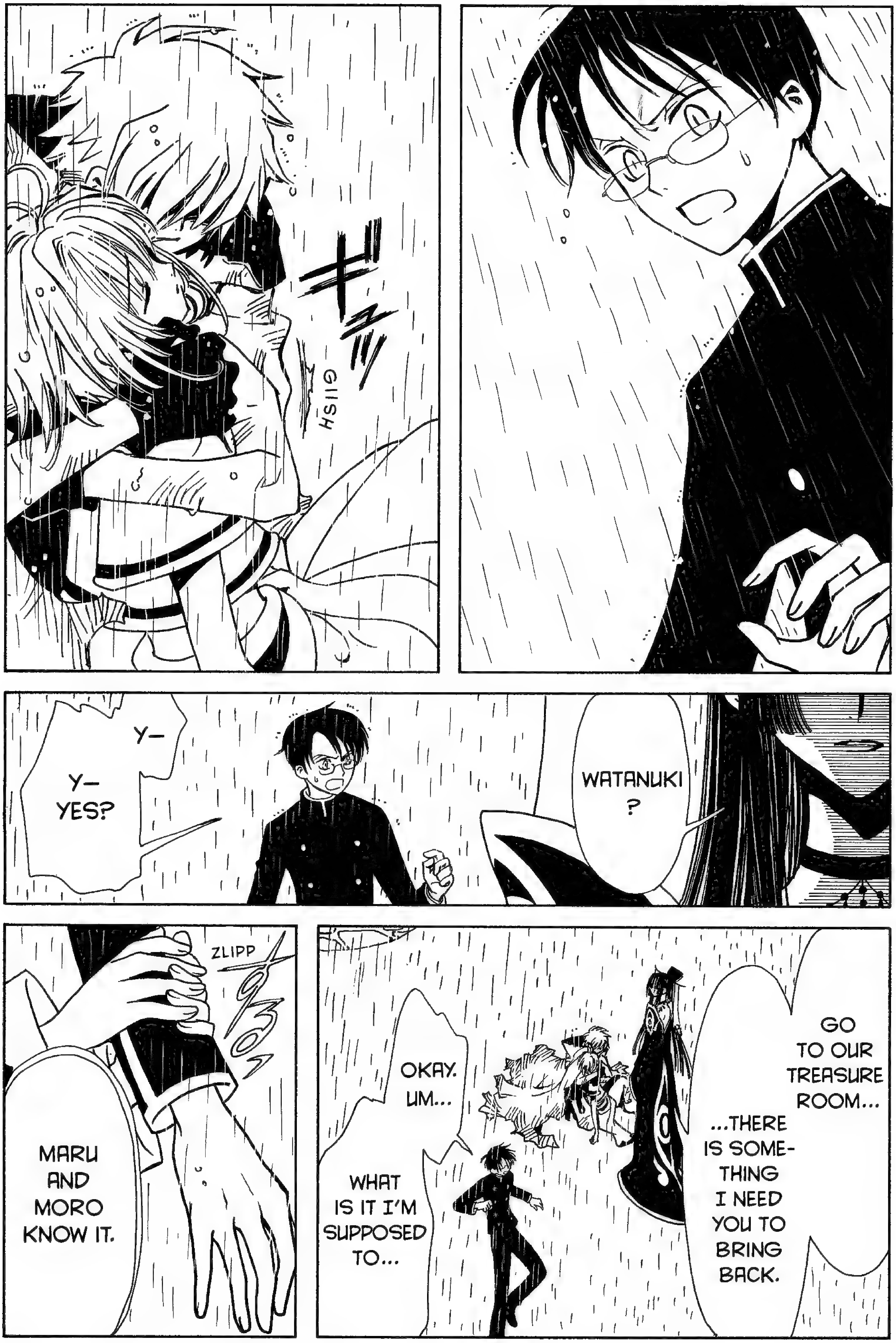
I'VE BEEN WAITING ...
...FOR THE TWO OF YOU.
YOU'RE NOT THE SAME ONES, BUT YOU ARE THE SAME OF A DIFFERENT WORLD.

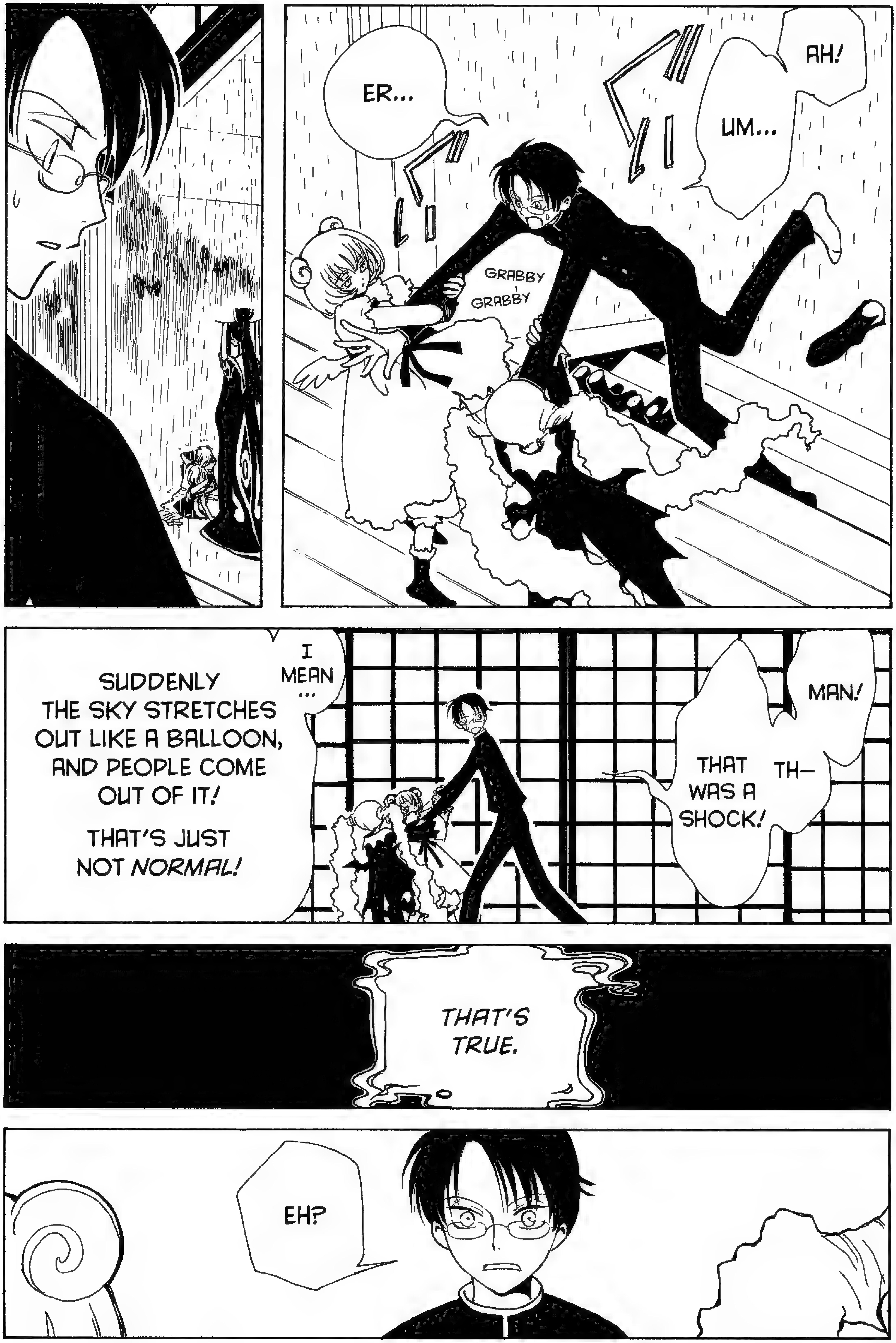
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

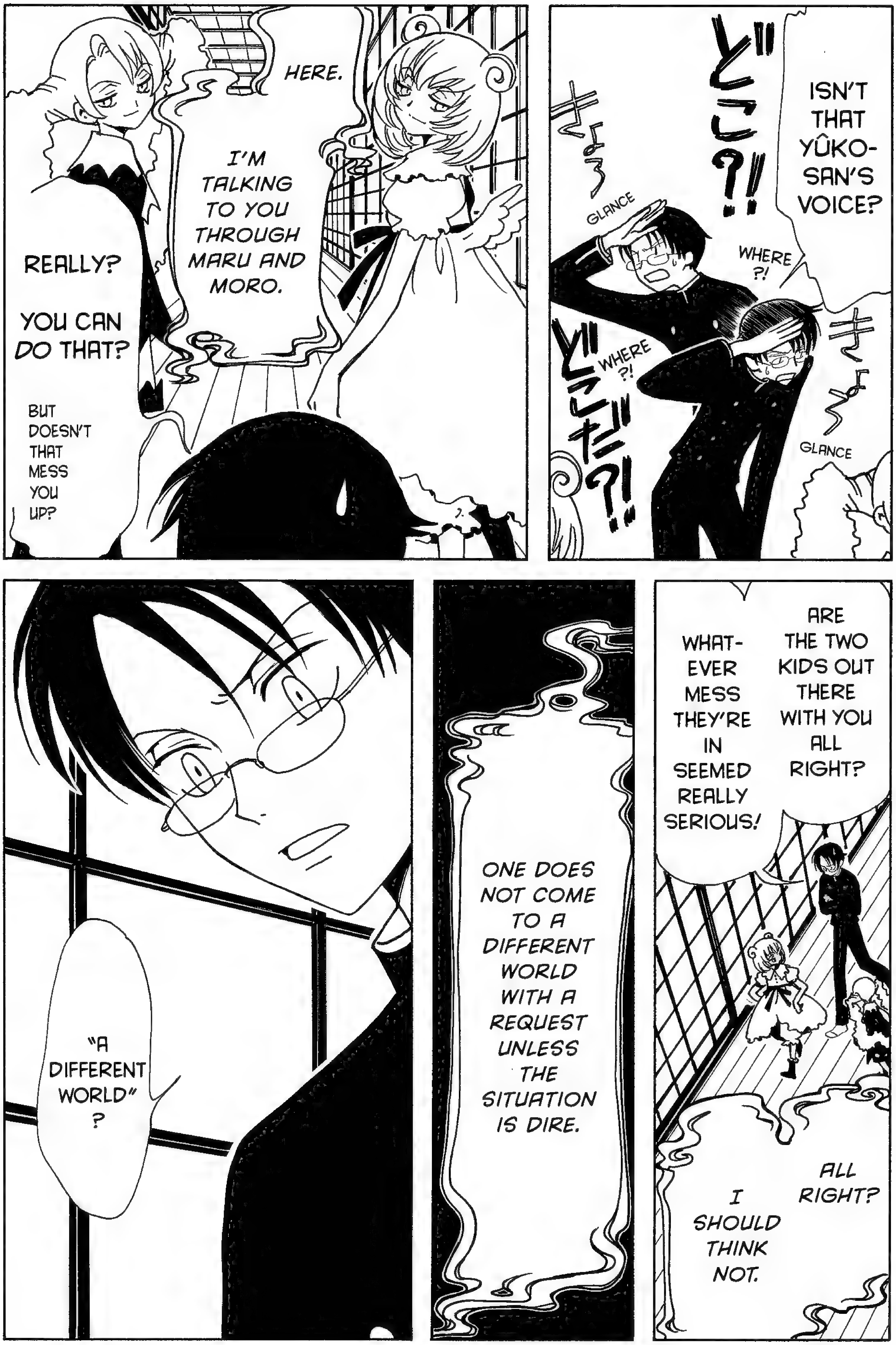

WHY ARE THERE PEOPLE SUDDENLY COMING OUT OF THE SKY?!
WH–
I WAS TOLD TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING!
AND IF I CAME HERE...
...YOU MIGHT HAVE A WAY TO HELP ME SAVE SAKURA!

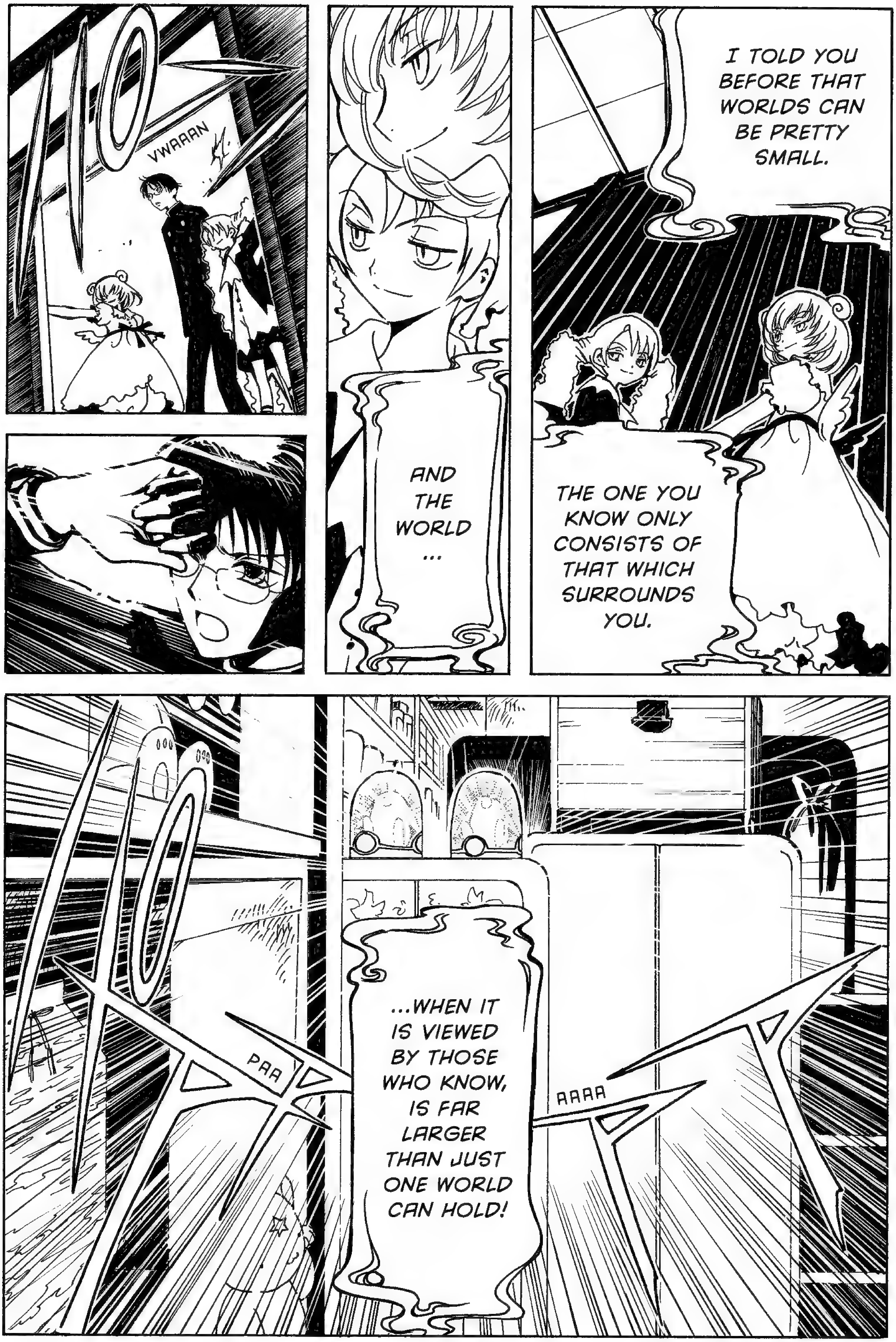

THIS CHILD'S NAME IS SAKURA, ISN'T IT?
YES.
AND YOU?
I'M SYAORAN.
THIS CHILD ...
...HAS LOST SOMETHING VERY PRECIOUS.
...YES.

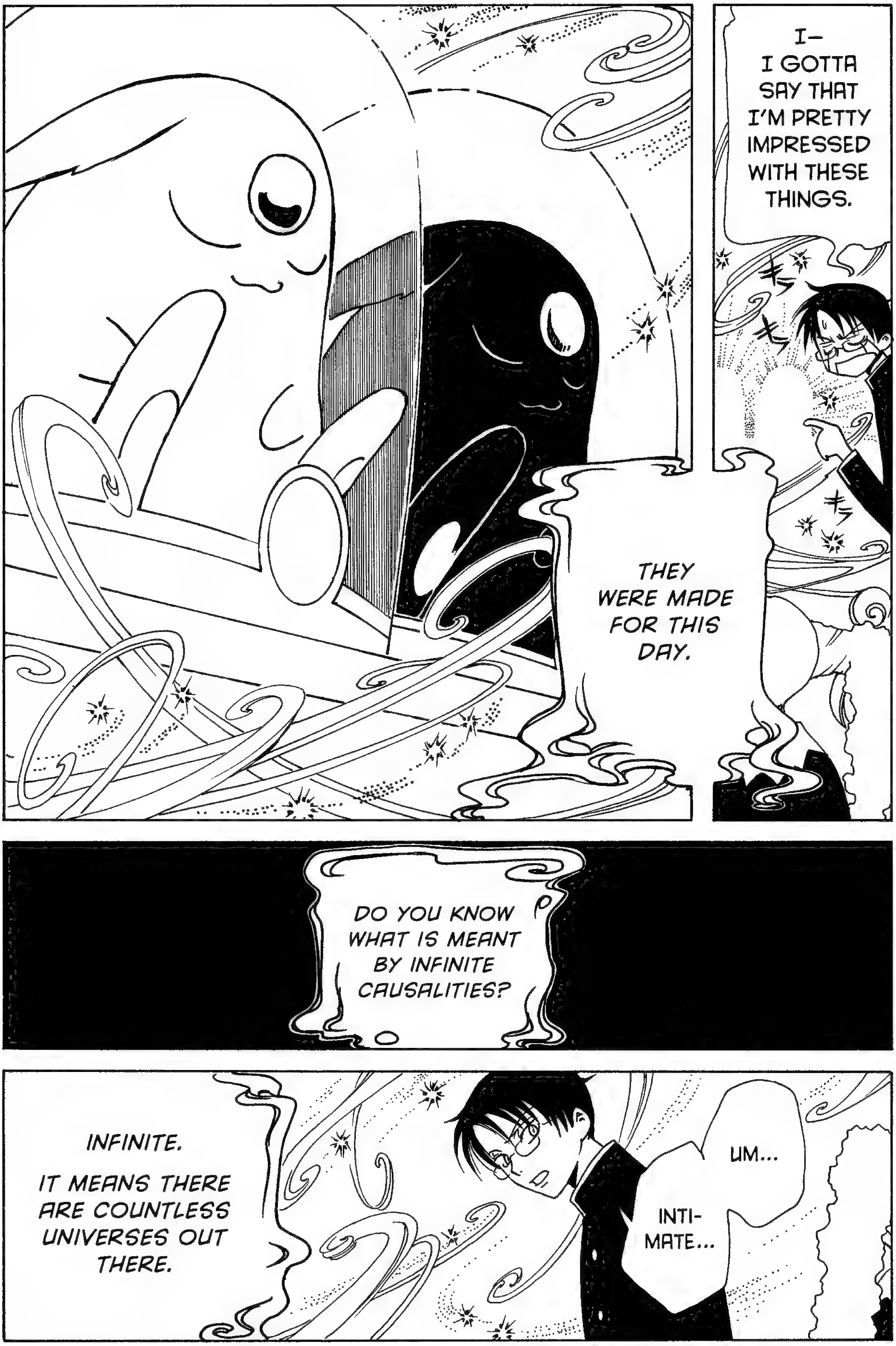

...THAT SOMETHING HAS BEEN SCATTERED TO MANY DIFFERENT WORLDS.
SSS
AND...
IF NOTHING IS DONE...
...THIS CHILD WILL DIE.

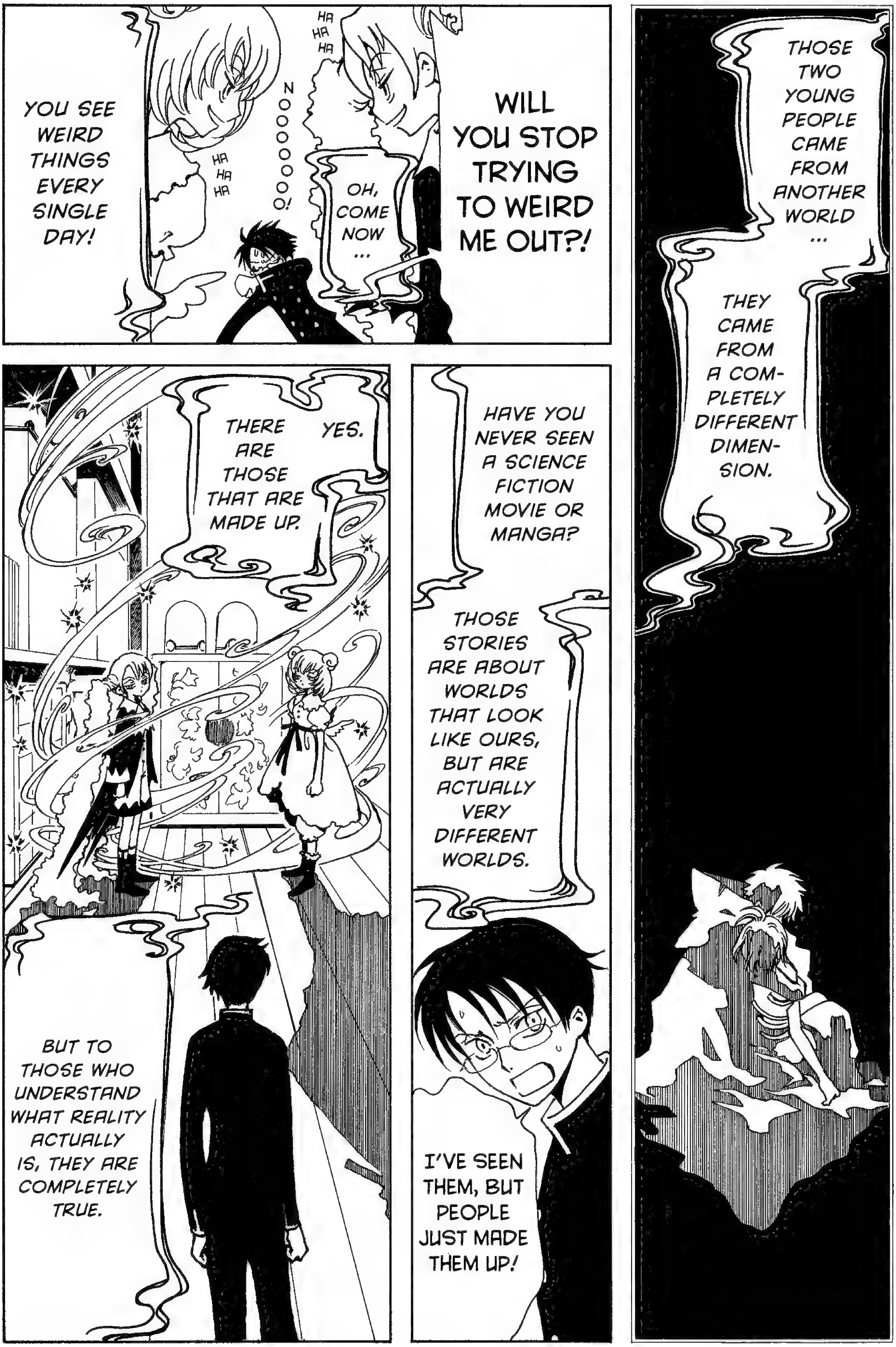

GIISH
WATANUKI?
Y— Y— YES?
GO TO OUR TREASURE ROOM...
...THERE IS SOMETHING I NEED YOU TO BRING BACK.
OKAY. UM...
WHAT IS IT I'M SUPPOSED TO...
ZLIPP
MARU AND MORO KNOW IT.

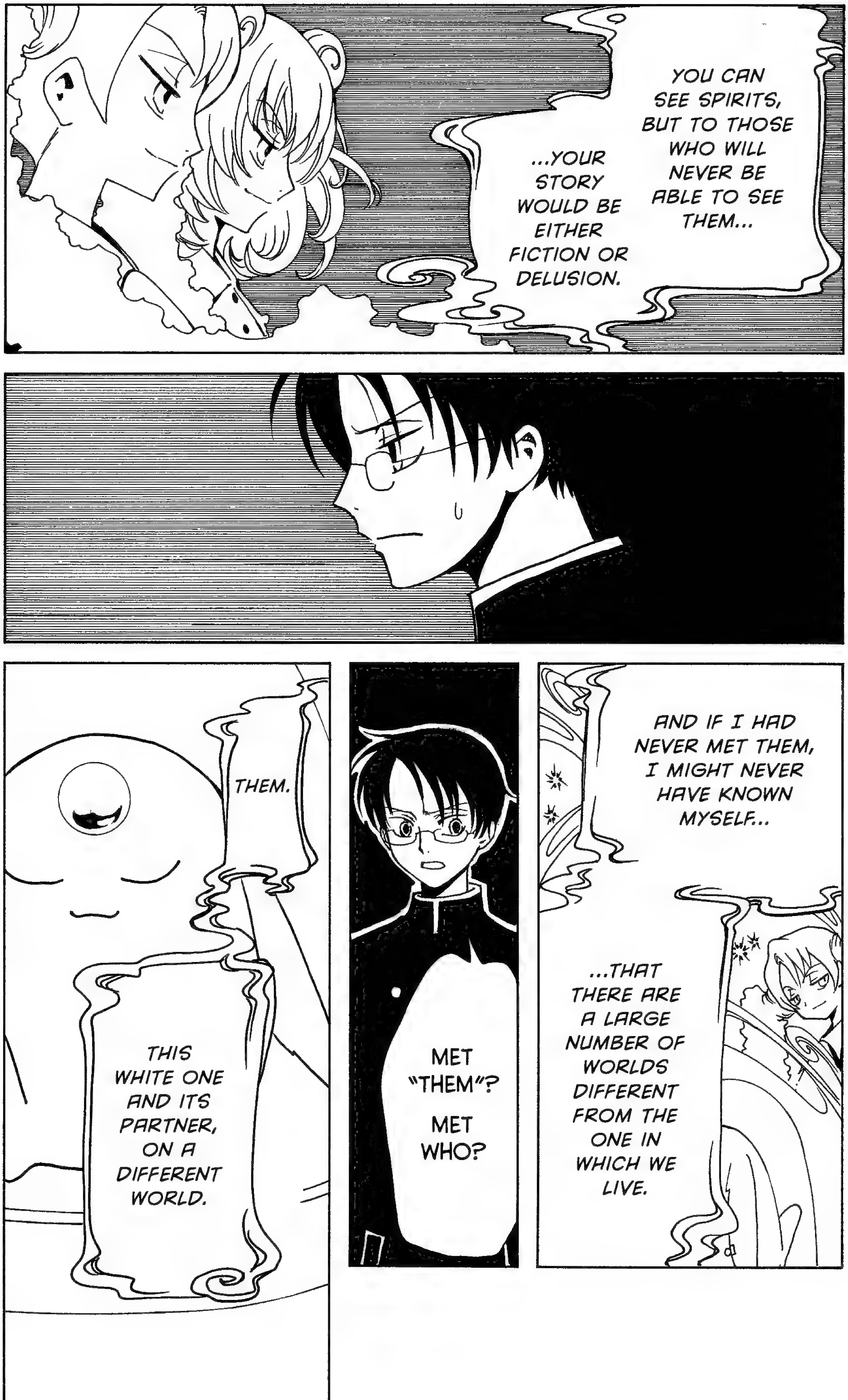

AH!
UM...
ER...
GRABBY GRABBY
MAN!
TH—
THAT WAS A SHOCK!
I MEAN...
SUDDENLY THE SKY STRETCHES OUT LIKE A BALLOON, AND PEOPLE COME OUT OF IT! THAT'S JUST NOT *NORMAL!*
THAT'S TRUE.
EH?

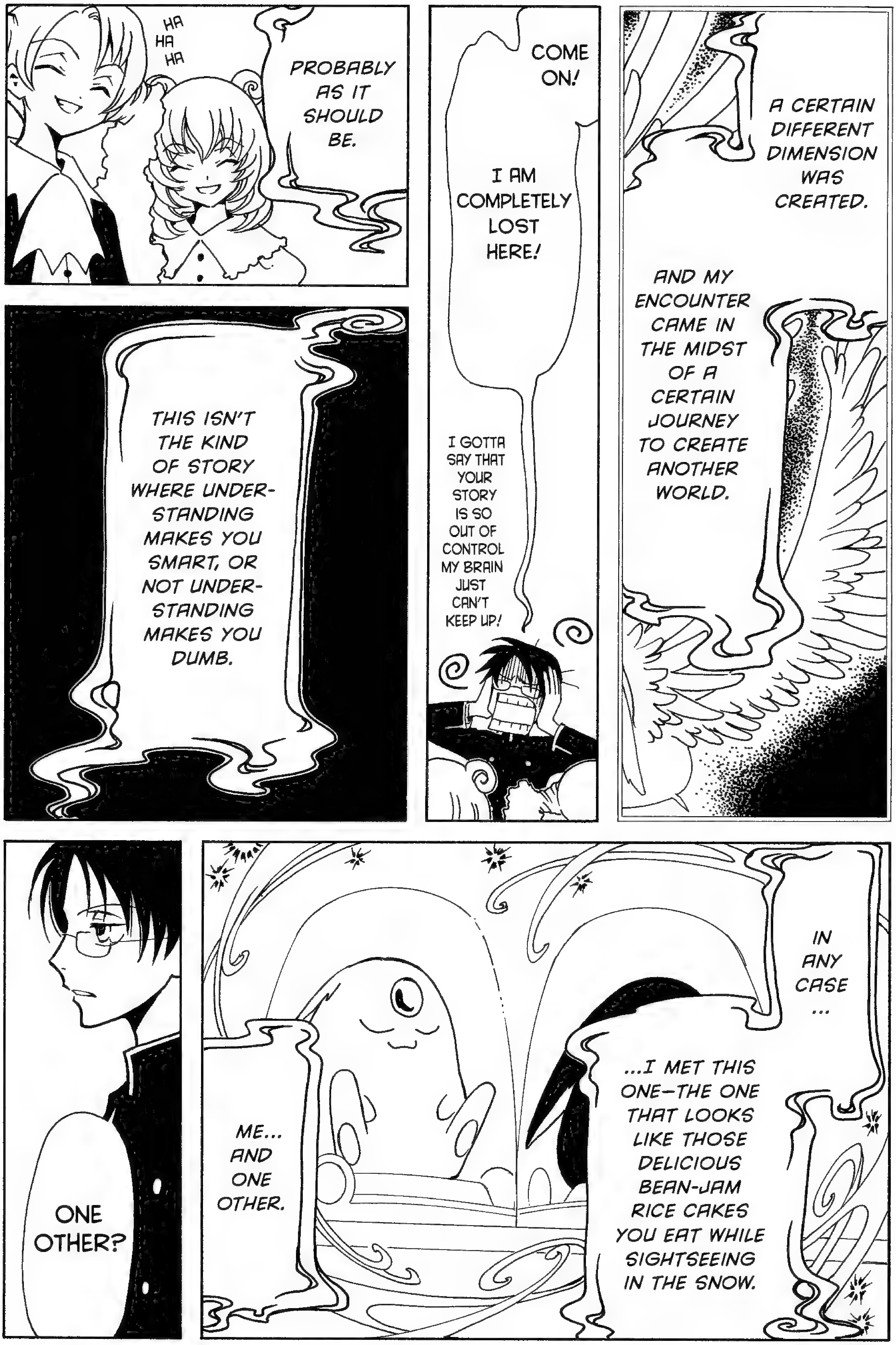

ISN'T THAT YÛKO-SAN'S VOICE?
どこ?!!
きょろ
GLANCE
WHERE ?!
どこだ?!!
WHERE ?!
きょろ
GLANCE
HERE.
I'M TALKING TO YOU THROUGH MARU AND MORO.
REALLY?
YOU CAN *DO* THAT?
BUT DOESN'T THAT MESS YOU UP?
ARE THE TWO KIDS OUT THERE WITH YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHATEVER MESS THEY'RE IN SEEMED REALLY SERIOUS!
ALL RIGHT?
I SHOULD THINK NOT.
ONE DOES NOT COME TO A DIFFERENT WORLD WITH A REQUEST UNLESS THE SITUATION IS DIRE.
"A DIFFERENT WORLD"?

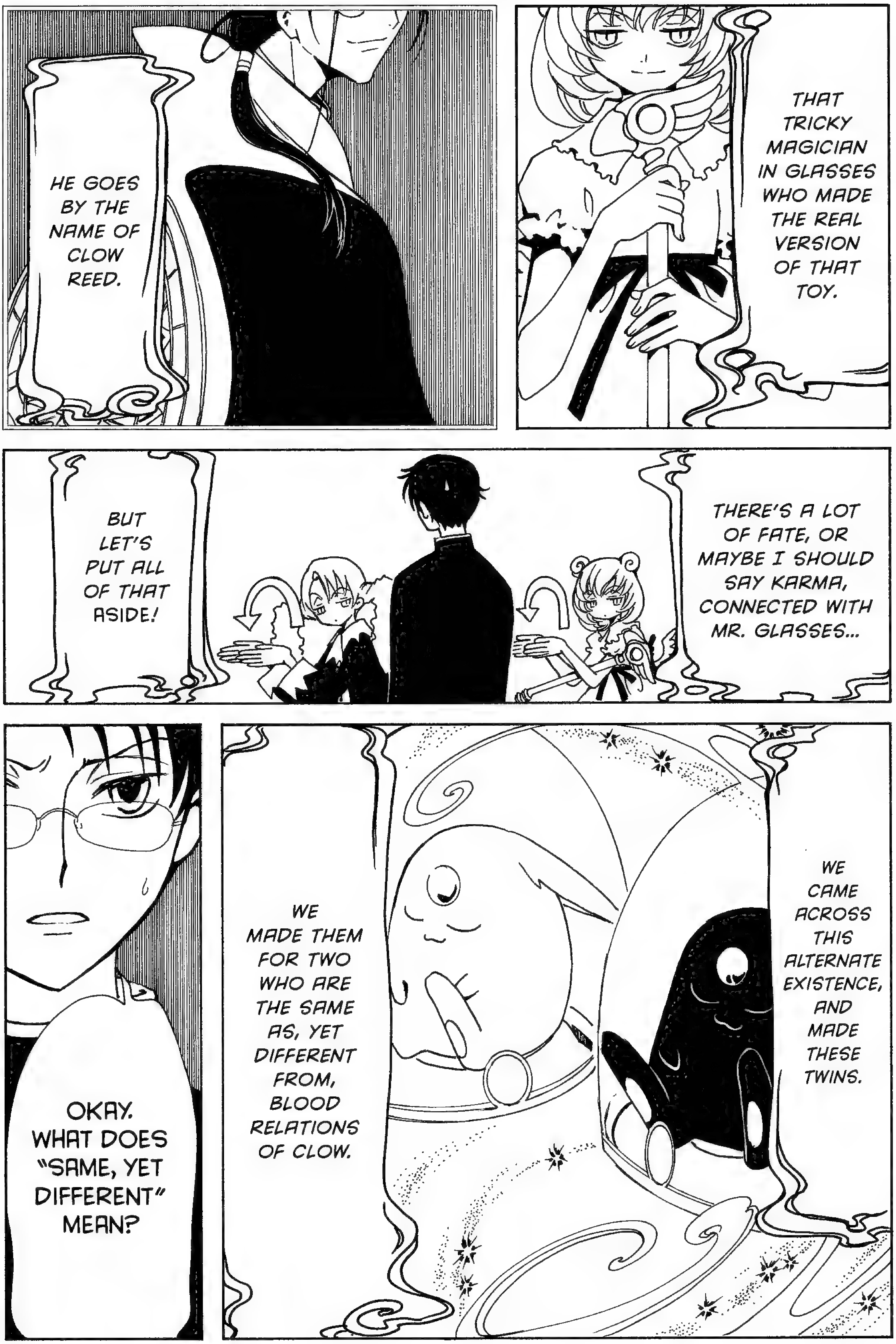

I TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT WORLDS CAN BE PRETTY SMALL.
THE ONE YOU KNOW ONLY CONSISTS OF THAT WHICH SURROUNDS YOU.
AND THE WORLD ...
VWAAAN
...WHEN IT IS VIEWED BY THOSE WHO KNOW, IS FAR LARGER THAN JUST ONE WORLD CAN HOLD!
AAAA
PAA


I— I GOTTA SAY THAT I'M PRETTY IMPRESSED WITH THESE THINGS.
THEY WERE MADE FOR THIS DAY.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS MEANT BY INFINITE CAUSALITIES?
UM...
INTIMATE...
INFINITE.
IT MEANS THERE ARE COUNTLESS UNIVERSES OUT THERE.

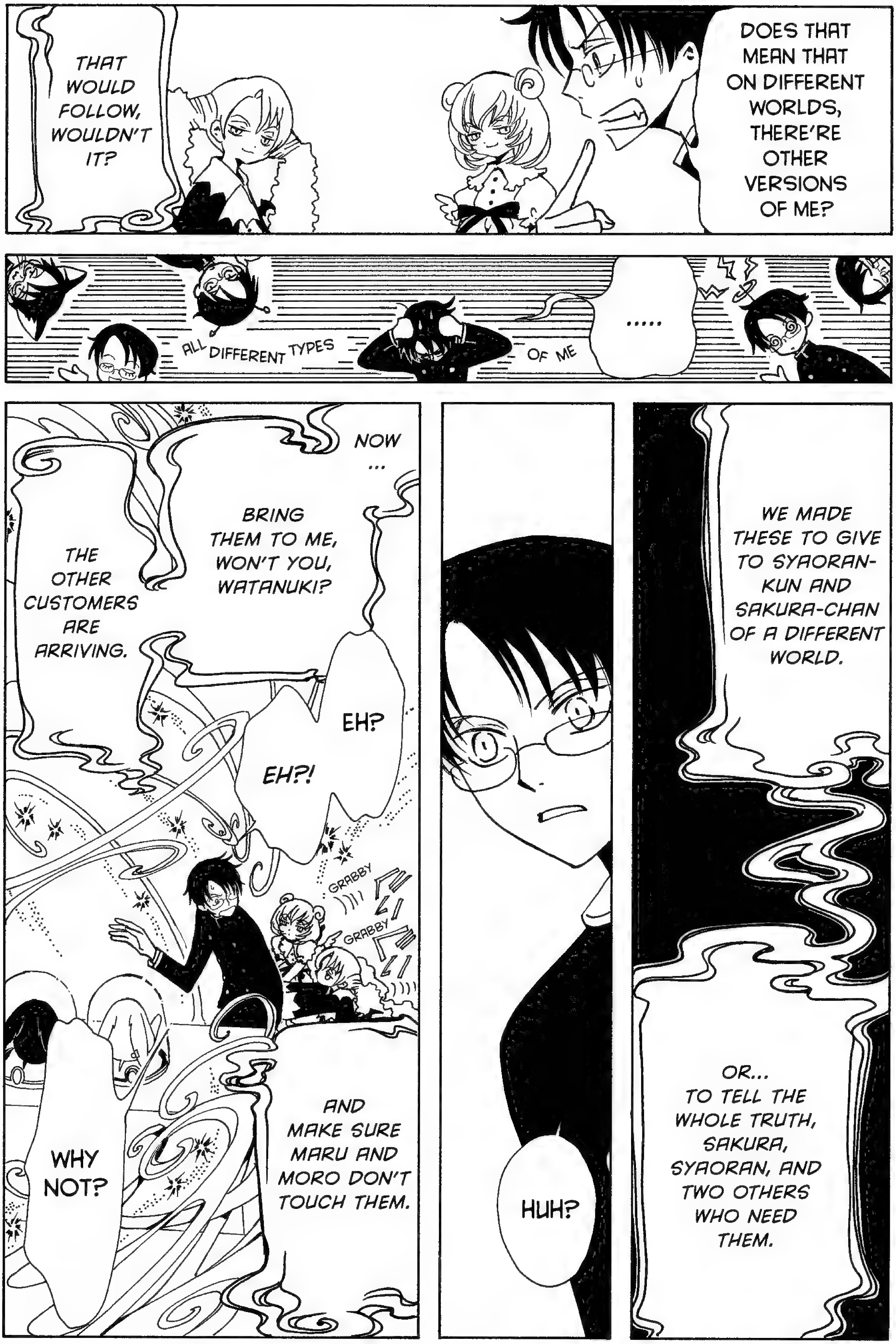

WILL YOU STOP TRYING TO WEIRD ME OUT?!
OH, COME NOW ...
HA HA HA
NOOOOOOO!
HA HA HA
YOU SEE WEIRD THINGS EVERY SINGLE DAY!
HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN A SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE OR MANGA?
THOSE STORIES ARE ABOUT WORLDS THAT LOOK LIKE OURS, BUT ARE ACTUALLY VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS.
I'VE SEEN THEM, BUT PEOPLE JUST MADE THEM UP!
YES.
THERE ARE THOSE THAT ARE MADE UP.
BUT TO THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND WHAT REALITY ACTUALLY IS, THEY ARE COMPLETELY TRUE.
THOSE TWO YOUNG PEOPLE CAME FROM ANOTHER WORLD ...
THEY CAME FROM A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT DIMENSION.

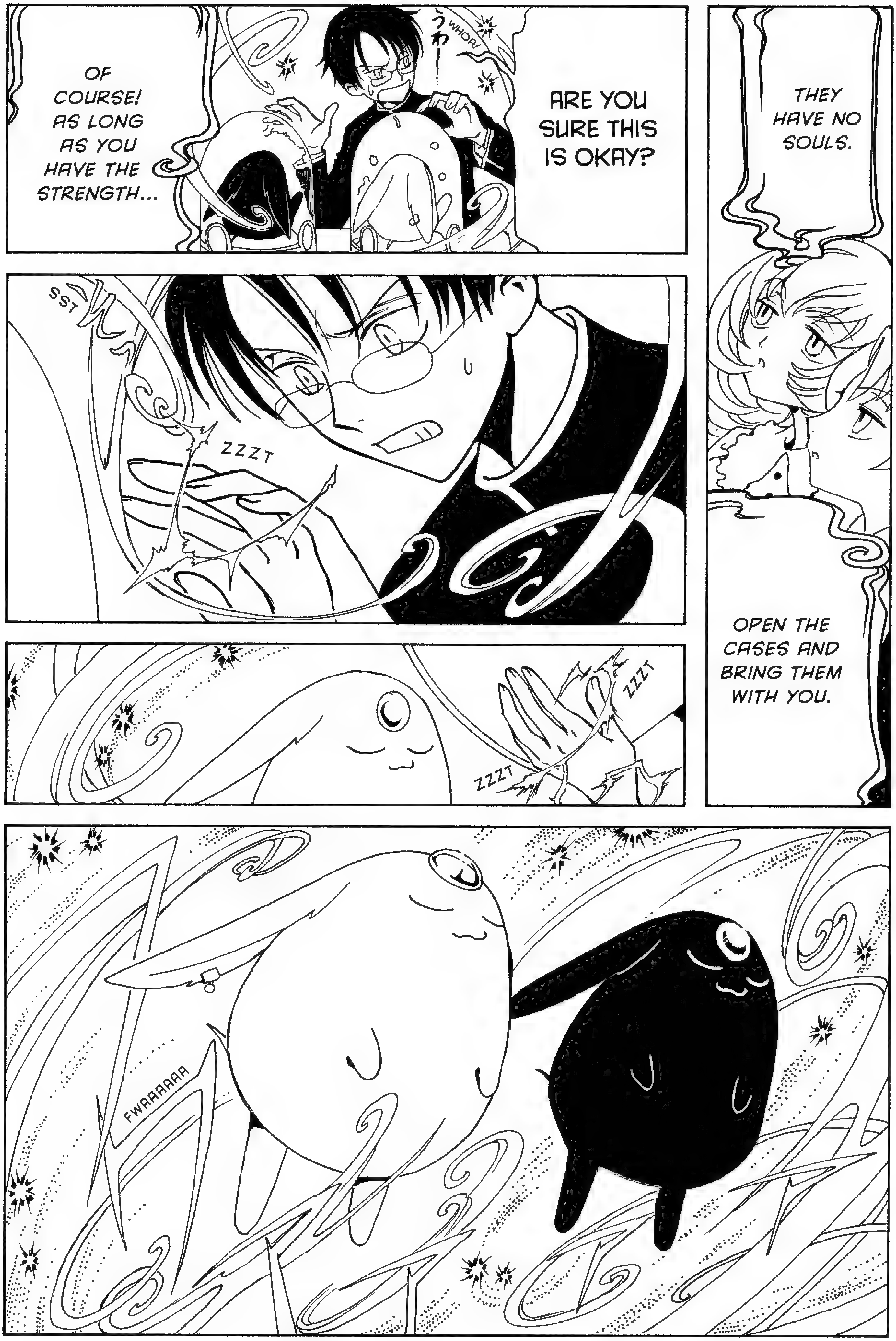

YOU CAN SEE SPIRITS, BUT TO THOSE WHO WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO SEE THEM...
...YOUR STORY WOULD BE EITHER FICTION OR DELUSION.
AND IF I HAD NEVER MET THEM, I MIGHT NEVER HAVE KNOWN MYSELF...
...THAT THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER OF WORLDS DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE IN WHICH WE LIVE.
MET "THEM"? MET WHO?
THEM.
THIS WHITE ONE AND ITS PARTNER, ON A DIFFERENT WORLD.

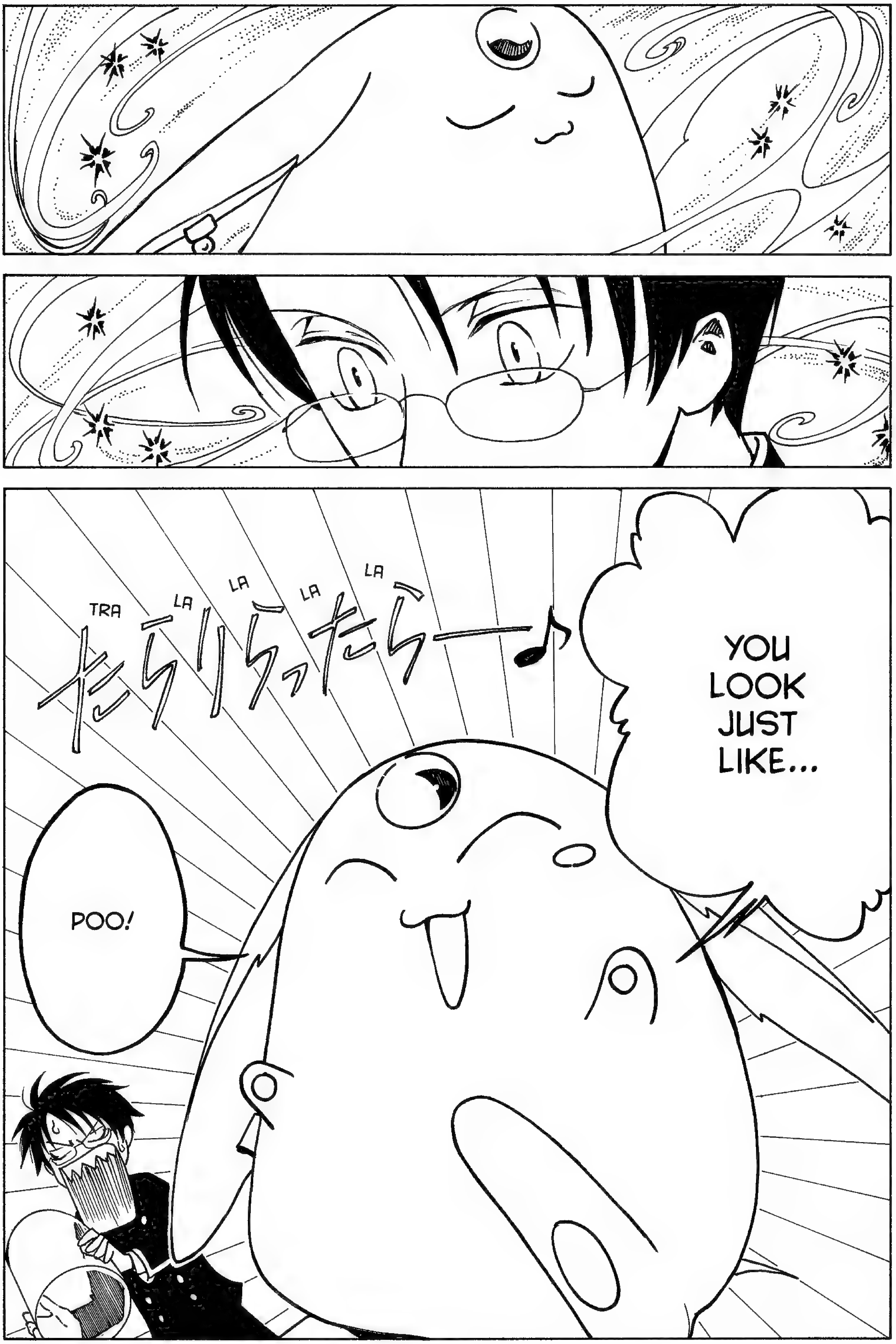

A CERTAIN DIFFERENT DIMENSION WAS CREATED.
AND MY ENCOUNTER CAME IN THE MIDST OF A CERTAIN JOURNEY TO CREATE ANOTHER WORLD.
COME ON!
I AM COMPLETELY LOST HERE!
I GOTTA SAY THAT YOUR STORY IS SO OUT OF CONTROL MY BRAIN JUST CAN'T KEEP UP!
HA HA HA
PROBABLY AS IT SHOULD BE.
THIS ISN'T THE KIND OF STORY WHERE UNDERSTANDING MAKES YOU SMART, OR NOT UNDERSTANDING MAKES YOU DUMB.
IN ANY CASE...
...I MET THIS ONE—THE ONE THAT LOOKS LIKE THOSE DELICIOUS BEAN-JAM RICE CAKES YOU EAT WHILE SIGHTSEEING IN THE SNOW.
ME... AND ONE OTHER.
ONE OTHER?

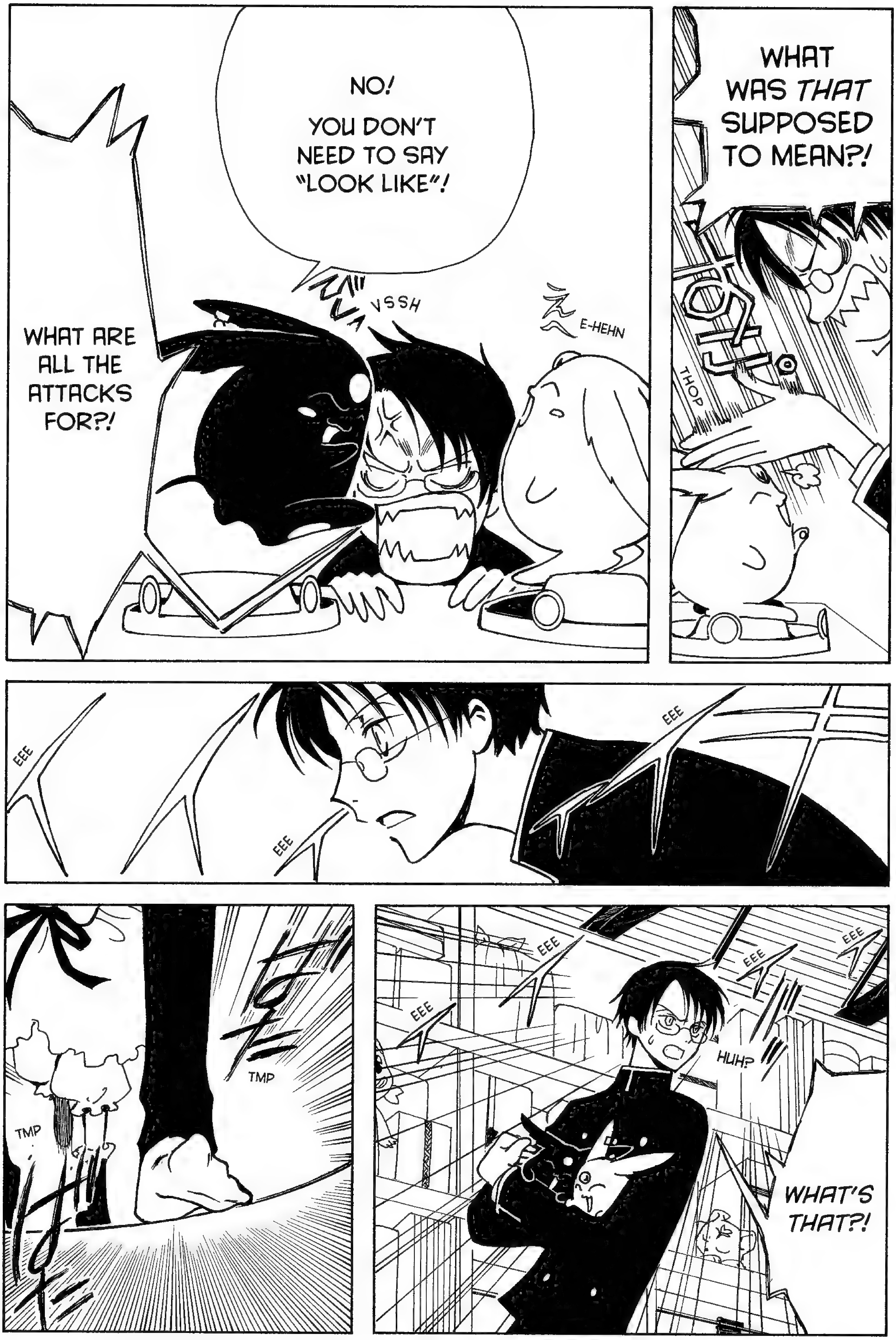

THAT TRICKY MAGICIAN IN GLASSES WHO MADE THE REAL VERSION OF THAT TOY.
HE GOES BY THE NAME OF CLOW REED.
THERE'S A LOT OF FATE, OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY KARMA, CONNECTED WITH MR. GLASSES...
BUT LET'S PUT ALL OF THAT ASIDE!
WE CAME ACROSS THIS ALTERNATE EXISTENCE, AND MADE THESE TWINS.
WE MADE THEM FOR TWO WHO ARE THE SAME AS, YET DIFFERENT FROM, BLOOD RELATIONS OF CLOW.
OKAY. WHAT DOES "SAME, YET DIFFERENT" MEAN?

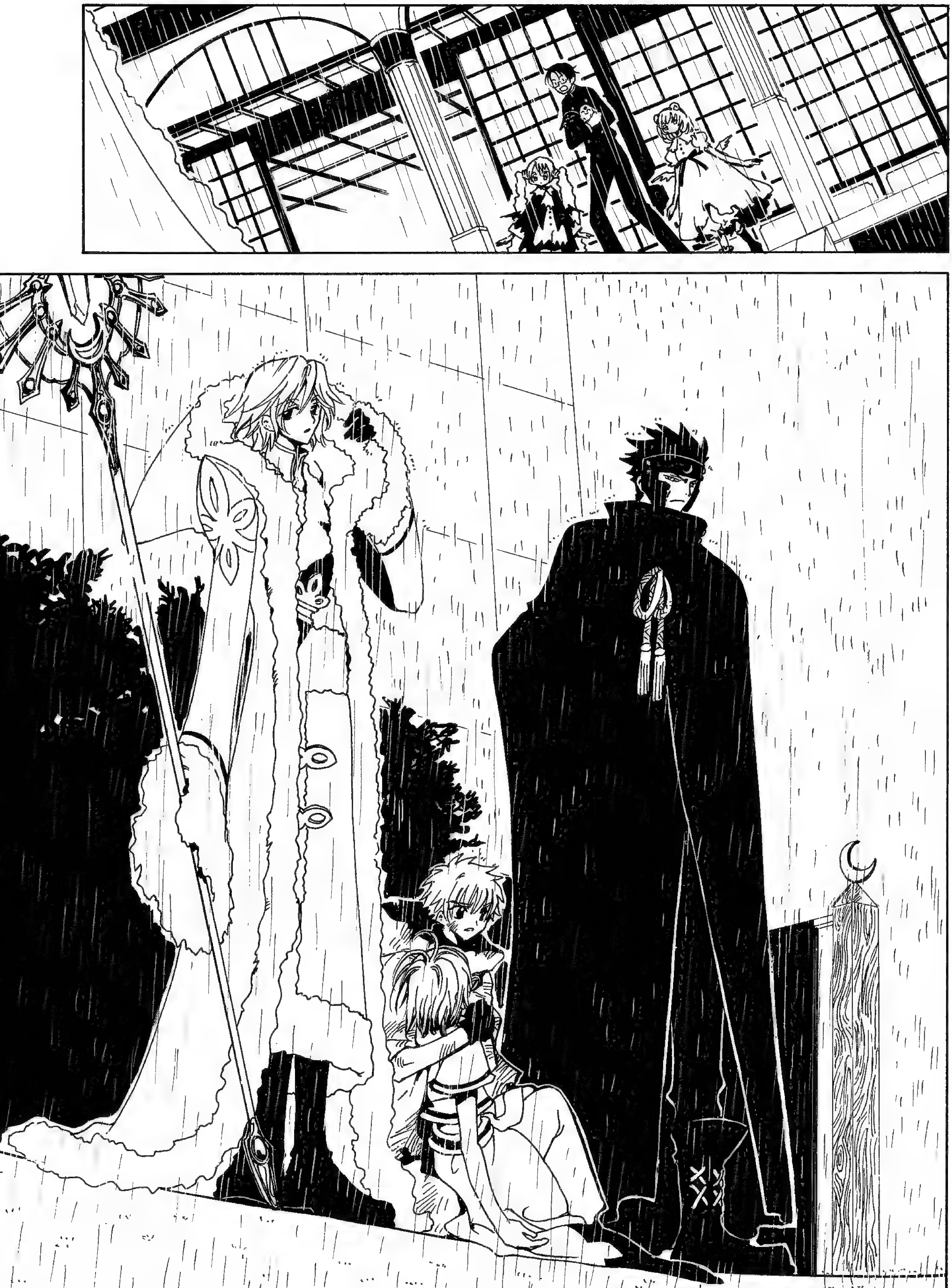
IN THE WORLD WE LIVE IN...
...SAKURA-CHAN AND SYAORAN-KUN—THE TWO YOU SAW—EXIST.
THEY ARE CLOW'S BLOOD RELATIONS.
BUT...
THEY EXIST IN OTHER WORLDS TOO.
THE TWO THAT ARE IN MY GARDEN...
THEY CAME FROM A DIFFERENT WORLD AND ARE LIVING DIFFERENT LIVES...
...BUT THEY SHARE THE SAME SOULS.

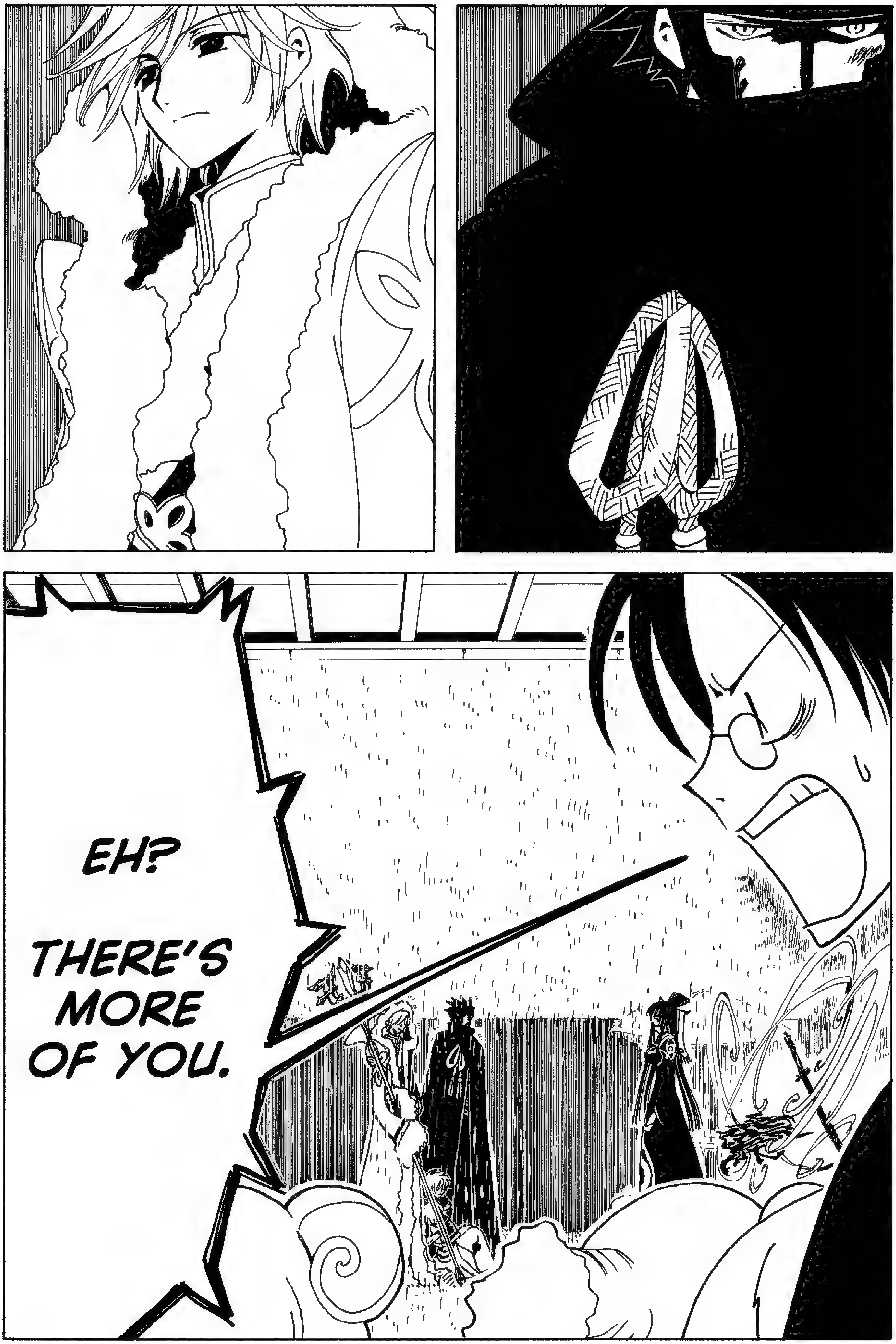

DOES THAT MEAN THAT ON DIFFERENT WORLDS, THERE'RE OTHER VERSIONS OF ME?
THAT WOULD FOLLOW, WOULDN'T IT?
.....
ALL DIFFERENT TYPES OF ME
WE MADE THESE TO GIVE TO SYAORAN-KUN AND SAKURA-CHAN OF A DIFFERENT WORLD.
OR... TO TELL THE WHOLE TRUTH, SAKURA, SYAORAN, AND TWO OTHERS WHO NEED THEM.
HUH?
NOW ...
BRING THEM TO ME, WON'T YOU, WATANUKI?
THE OTHER CUSTOMERS ARE ARRIVING.
EH?
EH?!
GRABBY
GRABBY
AND MAKE SURE MARU AND MORO DON'T TOUCH THEM.
WHY NOT?


THEY HAVE NO SOULS.
OPEN THE CASES AND BRING THEM WITH YOU.
うわ
WHOA!
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS OKAY?
OF COURSE! AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH...
SST
ZZZT
ZZZT
ZZZT
FWAAAAAA

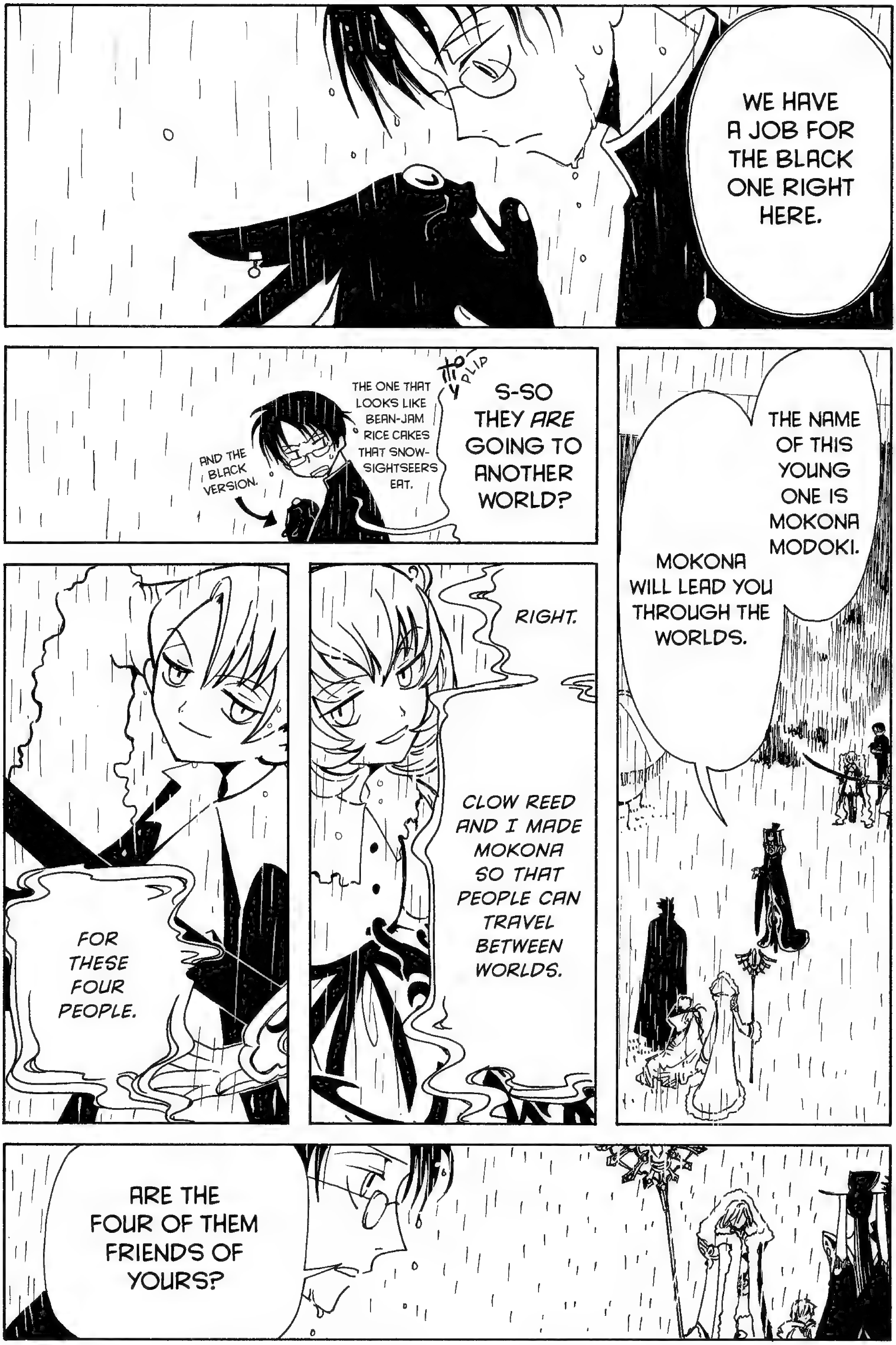

たらりらったらー♪
TRA LA LA LA LA
YOU LOOK JUST LIKE...
POO!

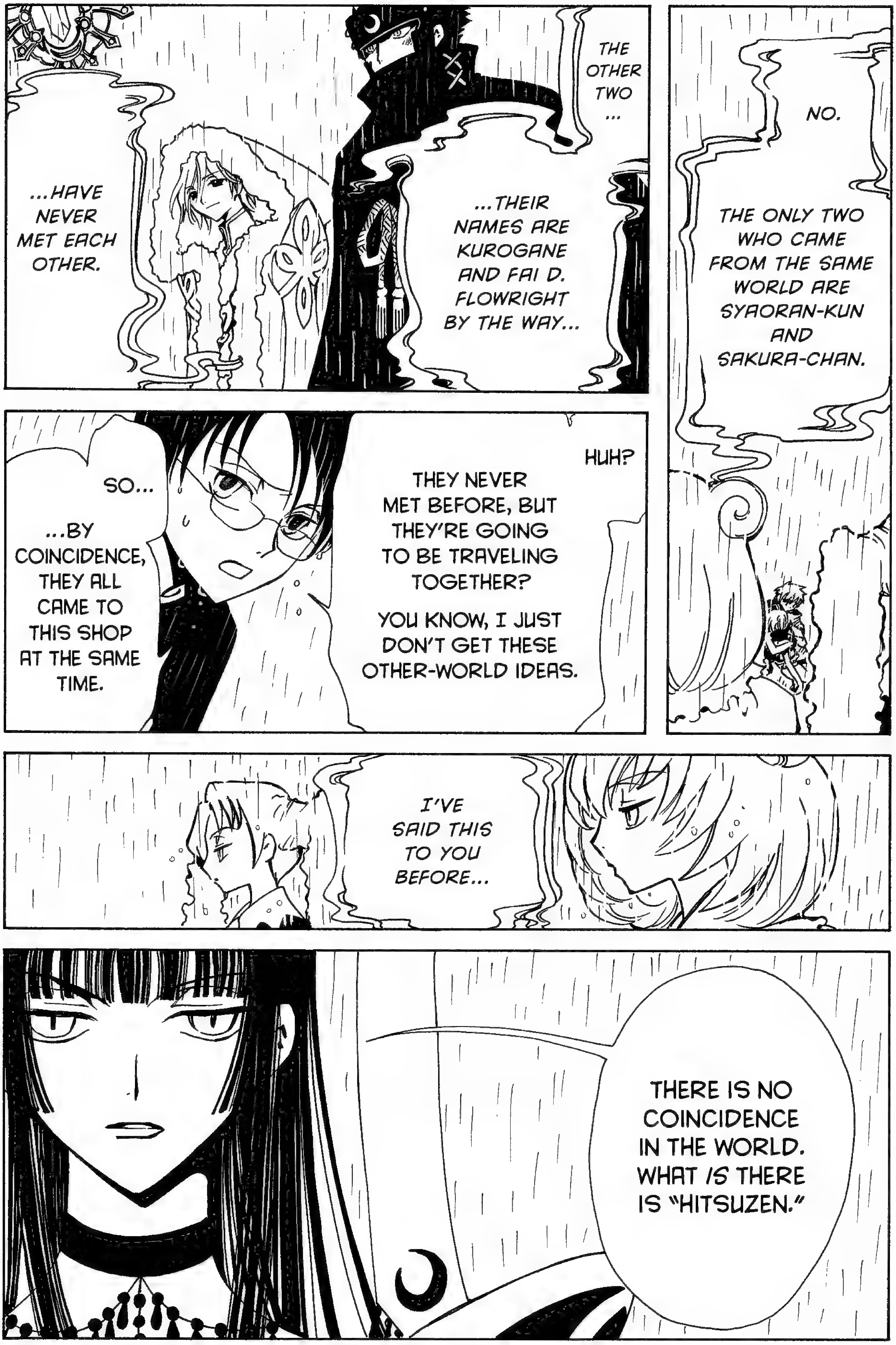

WHAT WAS *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
THOP
E-HEHN
NO! YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY "LOOK LIKE"!
VSSH
WHAT ARE ALL THE ATTACKS FOR?!
EEE
EEE
EEE
EEE
EEE
EEE
EEE
EEE
HUH?
WHAT'S THAT?!
TMP
TMP

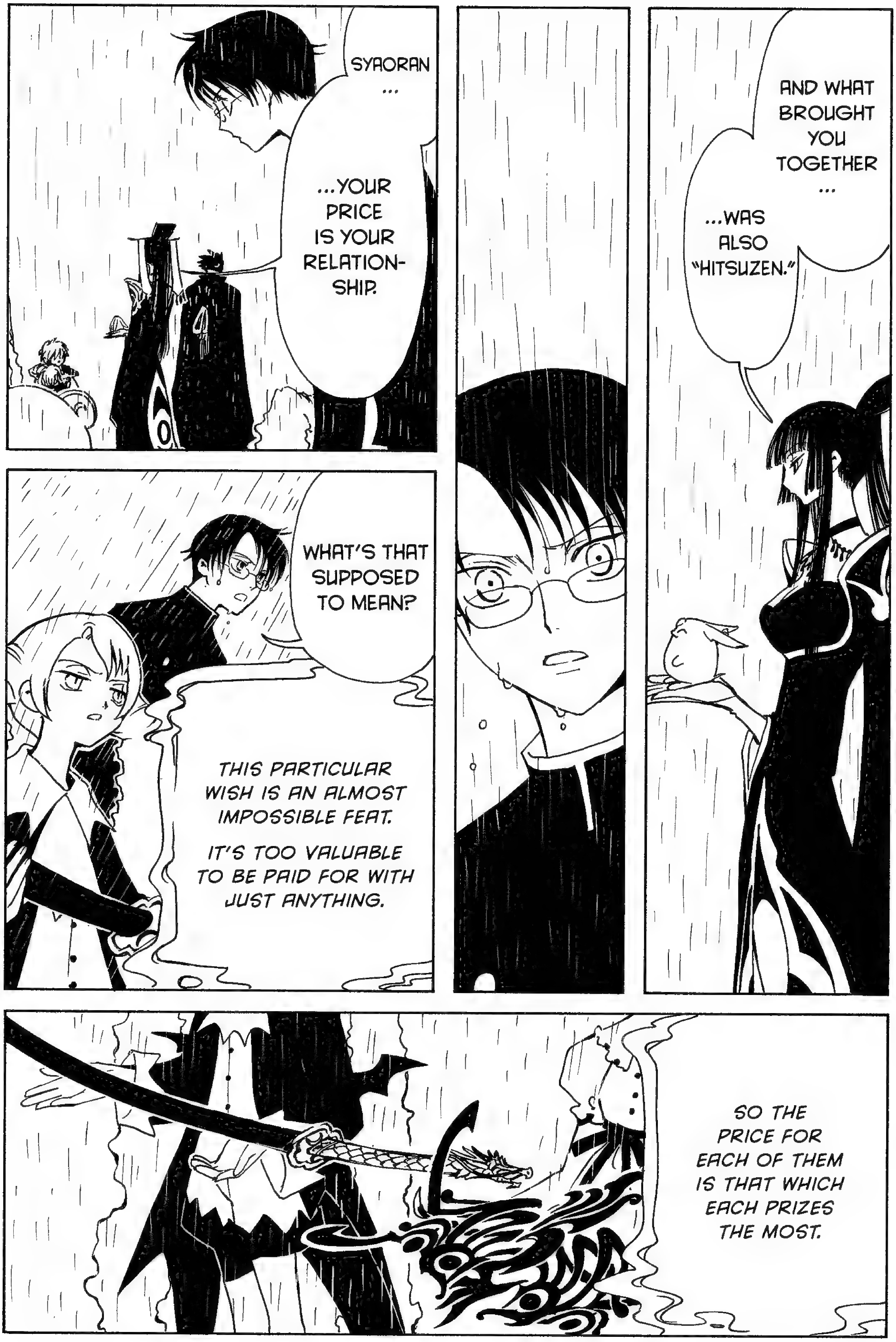



EH?
THERE'S MORE OF YOU.

HERE THEY ARE.
TMP
TMP
THANK YOU, WATANUKI.
UMM... WHAT ABOUT THIS ONE?
HUP
DON'T WORRY.
THE WHITE ONE IS THE ONLY ONE WE'RE HANDING TO THESE YOUNG PEOPLE.


WE HAVE A JOB FOR THE BLACK ONE RIGHT HERE.
THE NAME OF THIS YOUNG ONE IS MOKONA MODOKI.
MOKONA WILL LEAD YOU THROUGH THE WORLDS.
PLIP
S-SO THEY *ARE* GOING TO ANOTHER WORLD?
THE ONE THAT LOOKS LIKE BEAN-JAM RICE CAKES THAT SNOW-SIGHTSEERS EAT.
AND THE BLACK VERSION.
RIGHT.
CLOW REED AND I MADE MOKONA SO THAT PEOPLE CAN TRAVEL BETWEEN WORLDS.
FOR THESE FOUR PEOPLE.
ARE THE FOUR OF THEM FRIENDS OF YOURS?


NO.
THE ONLY TWO WHO CAME FROM THE SAME WORLD ARE SYAORAN-KUN AND SAKURA-CHAN.
THE OTHER TWO ...
...HAVE NEVER MET EACH OTHER.
...THEIR NAMES ARE KUROGANE AND FAI D. FLOWRIGHT BY THE WAY...
HUH?
THEY NEVER MET BEFORE, BUT THEY'RE GOING TO BE TRAVELING TOGETHER?
YOU KNOW, I JUST DON'T GET THESE OTHER-WORLD IDEAS.
SO...
...BY COINCIDENCE, THEY ALL CAME TO THIS SHOP AT THE SAME TIME.
I'VE SAID THIS TO YOU BEFORE...
THERE IS NO COINCIDENCE IN THE WORLD. WHAT *IS* THERE IS "HITSUZEN."

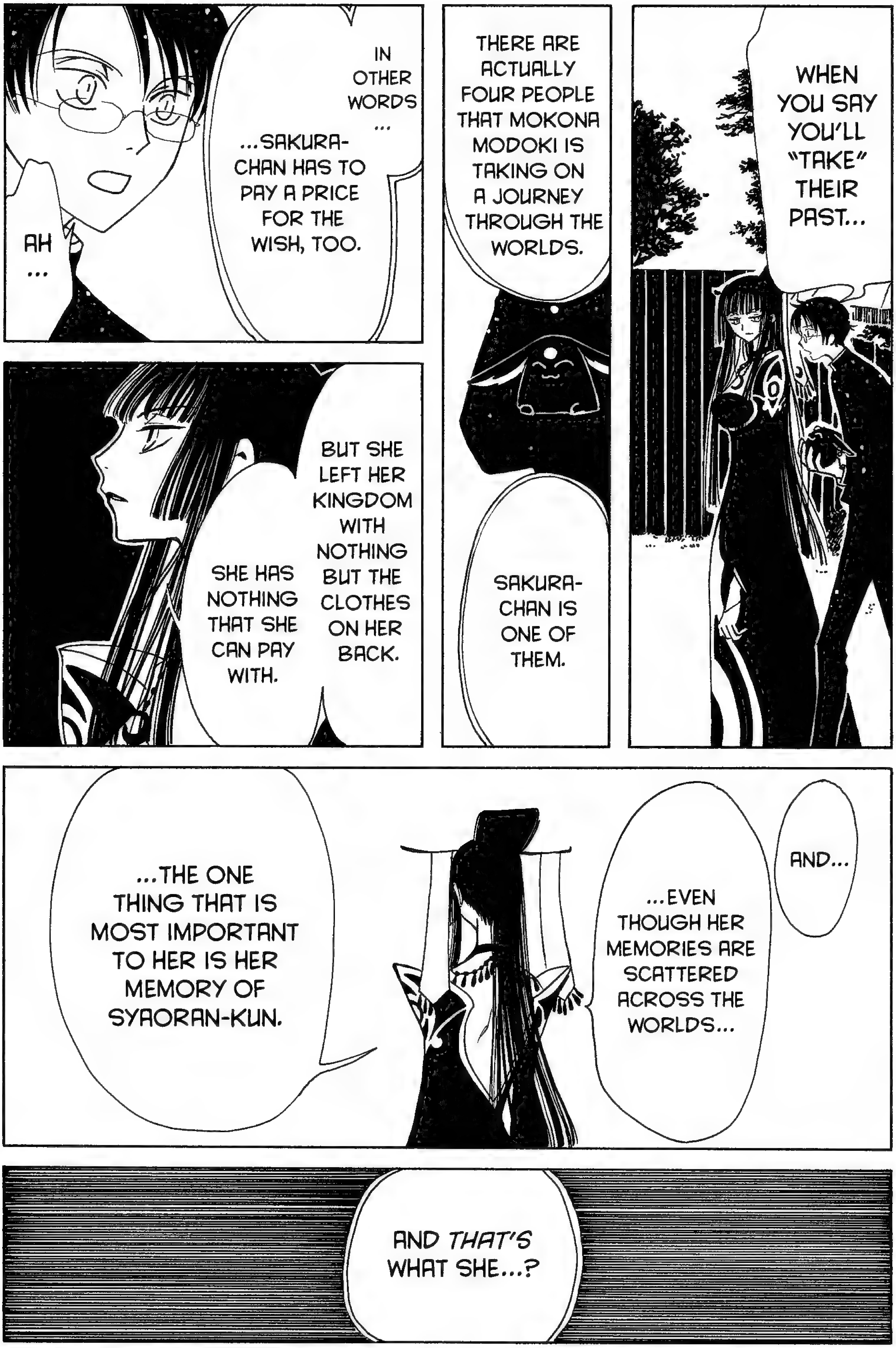

AND WHAT BROUGHT YOU TOGETHER ...
...WAS ALSO "HITSUZEN."
SYAORAN ...
...YOUR PRICE IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
THIS PARTICULAR WISH IS AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FEAT.
IT'S TOO VALUABLE TO BE PAID FOR WITH JUST ANYTHING.
SO THE PRICE FOR EACH OF THEM IS THAT WHICH EACH PRIZES THE MOST.

THE ITEM THAT YOUNG MAN PRIZES THE MOST IS SAKURA-CHAN.
THE TIME THAT THE TWO OF THEM SPENT TOGETHER.
AND THE THING THEY BUILT OVER THAT TIME ...
THEIR RELATIONSHIP.
THE TREASURE THAT IS MOST PRIZED.
AND THAT IS WHAT I'LL TAKE.
THAT SAID...
...ARE YOU STILL DETERMINED TO SEE IT THROUGH?
..... YES!

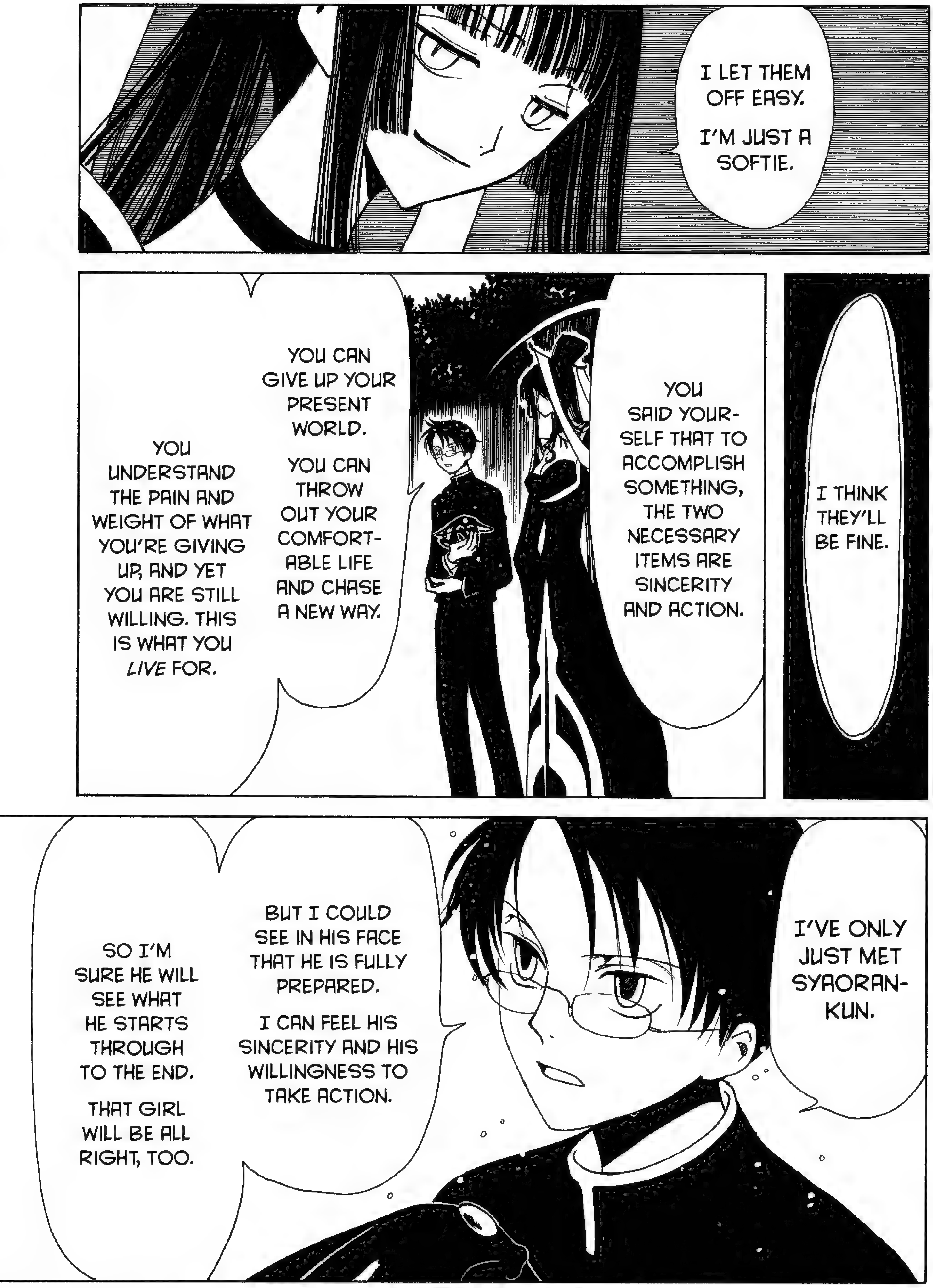
SINCERITY AND DETERMINATION...
NO MATTER WHAT A PERSON WANTS TO ATTEMPT, THOSE ARE NEEDED. AND IT SEEMS THAT YOU ARE WELL PROVIDED WITH BOTH.
AND SO...
VWOO

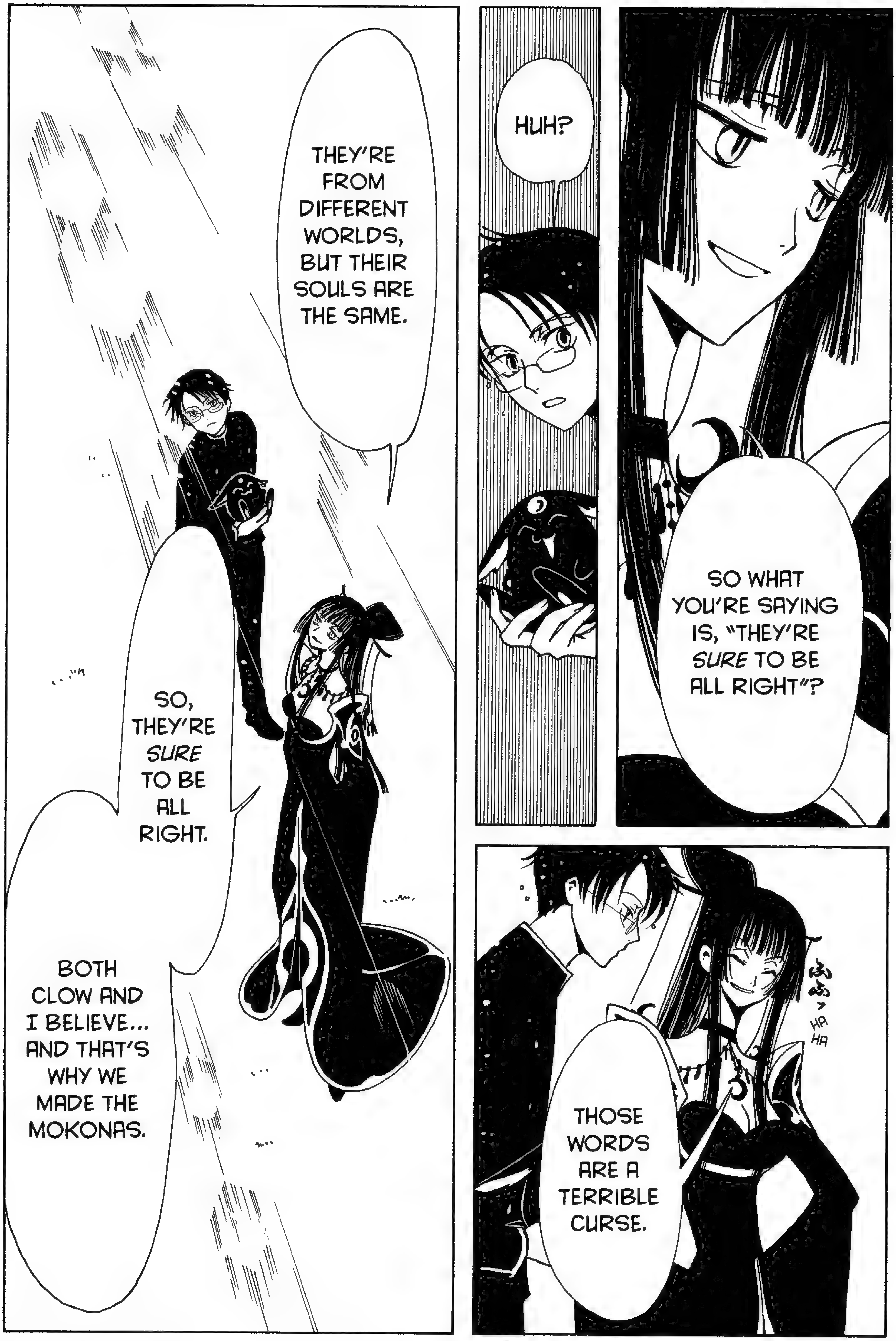
YOU MAY GO!

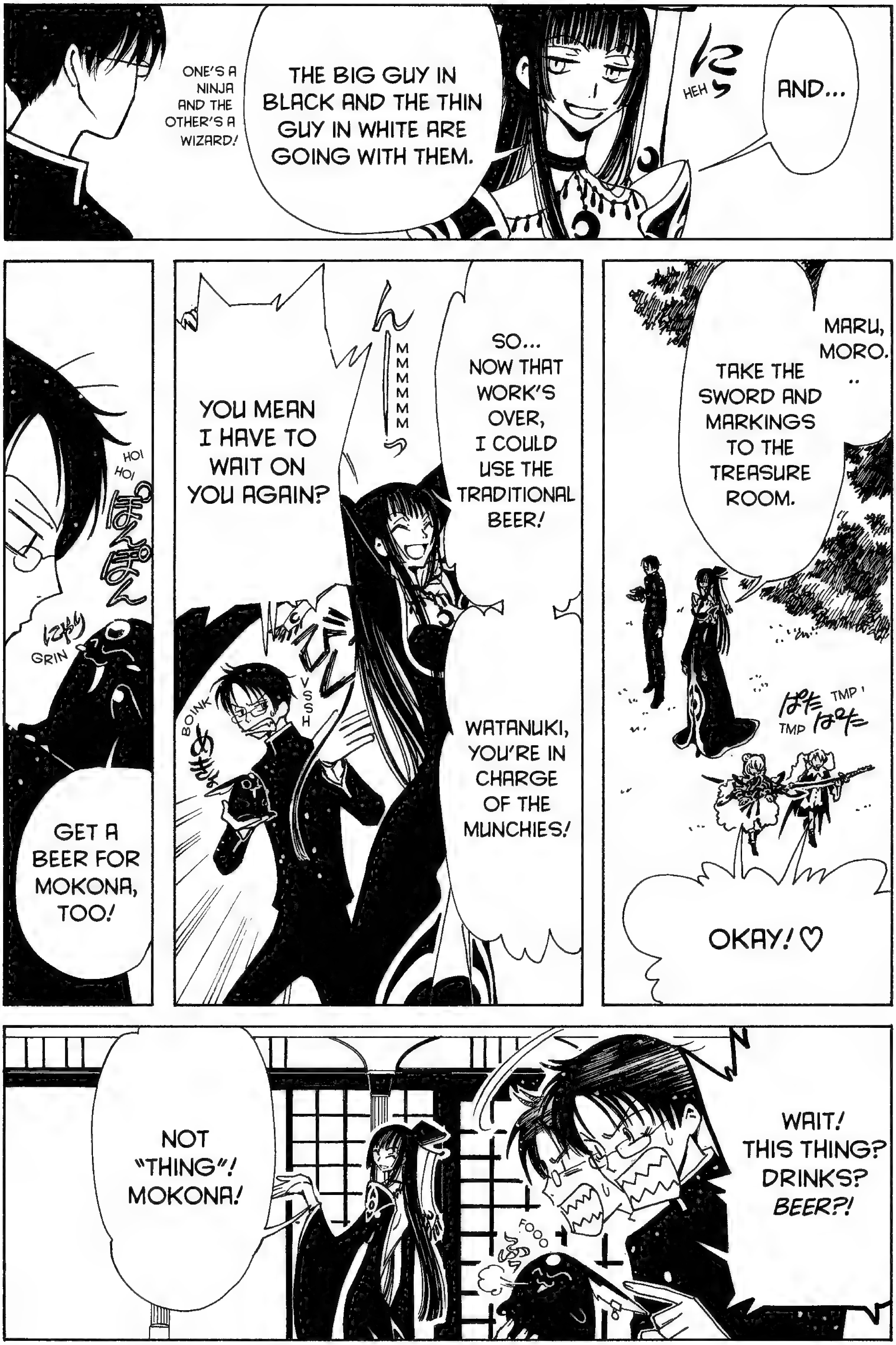
GOWAAAAAA
SHULOOM
PISH
PISH
I WISH...
SHAAA
...YOU ALL THE BEST OF FORTUNE ON YOUR JOURNEY!

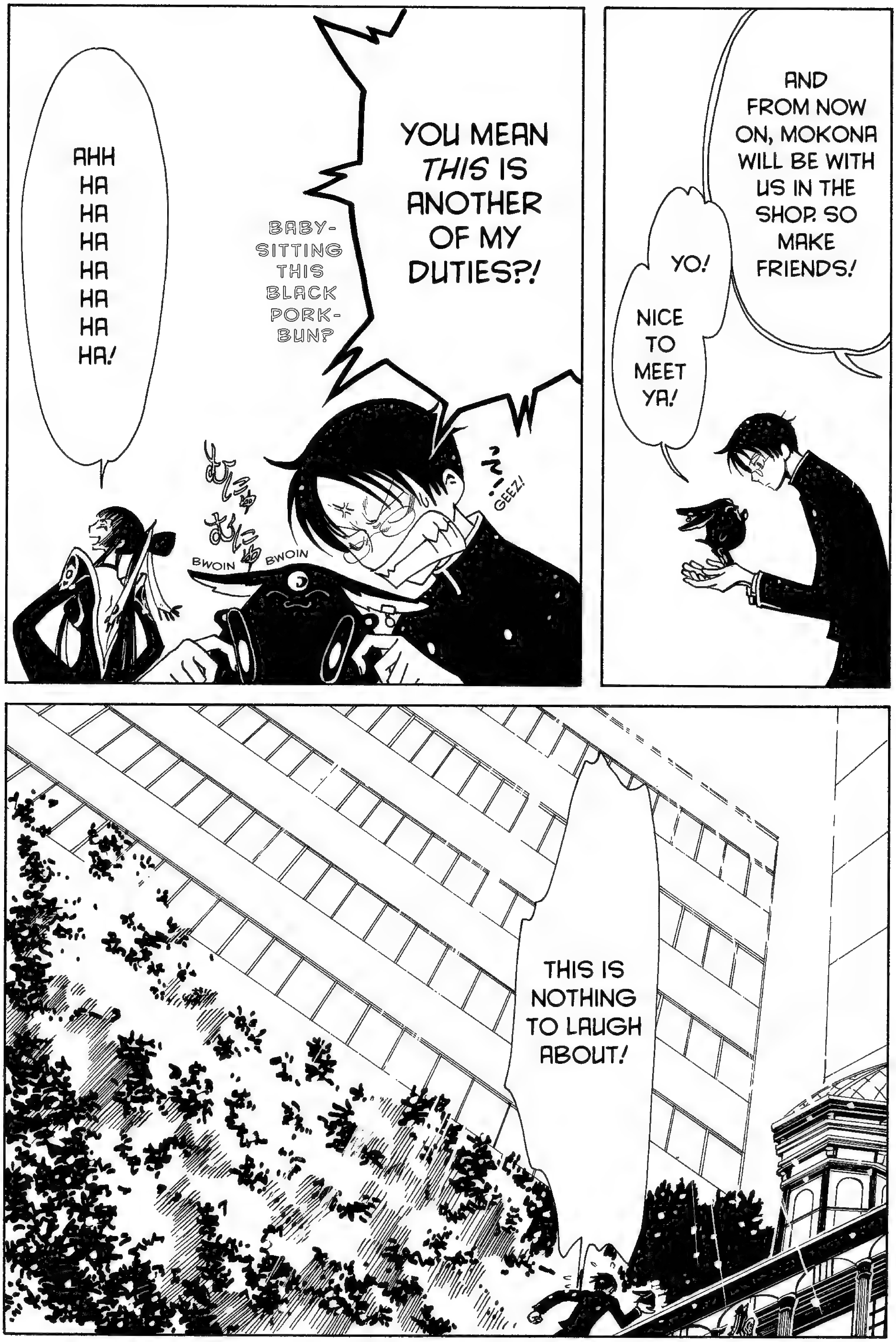

WHEN YOU SAY YOU'LL "TAKE" THEIR PAST...
THERE ARE ACTUALLY FOUR PEOPLE THAT MOKONA MODOKI IS TAKING ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLDS.
SAKURA-CHAN IS ONE OF THEM.
IN OTHER WORDS...
...SAKURA-CHAN HAS TO PAY A PRICE FOR THE WISH, TOO.
AH...
BUT SHE LEFT HER KINGDOM WITH NOTHING BUT THE CLOTHES ON HER BACK.
SHE HAS NOTHING THAT SHE CAN PAY WITH.
AND...
...EVEN THOUGH HER MEMORIES ARE SCATTERED ACROSS THE WORLDS...
...THE ONE THING THAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO HER IS HER MEMORY OF SYAORAN-KUN.
AND *THAT'S* WHAT SHE...?

YES.
THAT IS THE PRICE SHE PAYS.
SHE IS THE PERSON FOR WHOM THE HELP OF MOKONA MODOKI IS THE MOST URGENT.
AND SO, THE COST TO HER IS THE GREATEST.
AND IN TRUTH, I SHOULD HAVE DEMANDED ALL OF SYAORAN-KUN'S MEMORIES OF SAKURA-CHAN AS WELL.
BUT...
...THIS IS ENOUGH.
TO HAVE THE PERSON MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU FORGET YOU COMPLETELY...
IT TURNED OUT THAT SYAORAN-KUN PAID THE PRICE WITH HIS MOST PRECIOUS RELATIONSHIP

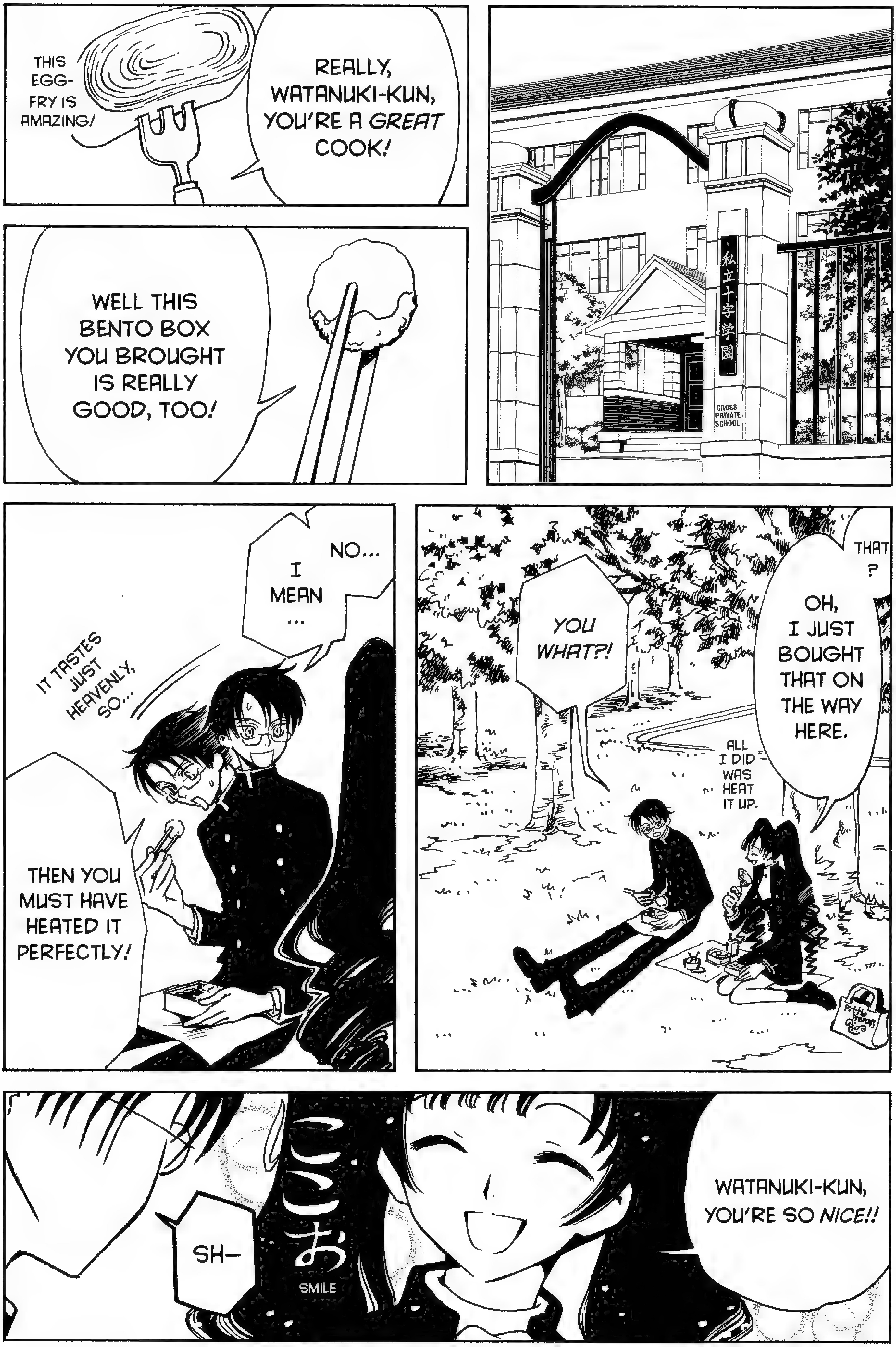

I LET THEM OFF EASY.
I'M JUST A SOFTIE.
I THINK THEY'LL BE FINE.
YOU SAID YOURSELF THAT TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING, THE TWO NECESSARY ITEMS ARE SINCERITY AND ACTION.
YOU CAN GIVE UP YOUR PRESENT WORLD.
YOU CAN THROW OUT YOUR COMFORTABLE LIFE AND CHASE A NEW WAY.
YOU UNDERSTAND THE PAIN AND WEIGHT OF WHAT YOU'RE GIVING UP, AND YET YOU ARE STILL WILLING. THIS IS WHAT YOU *LIVE* FOR.
I'VE ONLY JUST MET SYAORAN-KUN.
BUT I COULD SEE IN HIS FACE THAT HE IS FULLY PREPARED.
I CAN FEEL HIS SINCERITY AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ACTION.
SO I'M SURE HE WILL SEE WHAT HE STARTS THROUGH TO THE END.
THAT GIRL WILL BE ALL RIGHT, TOO.

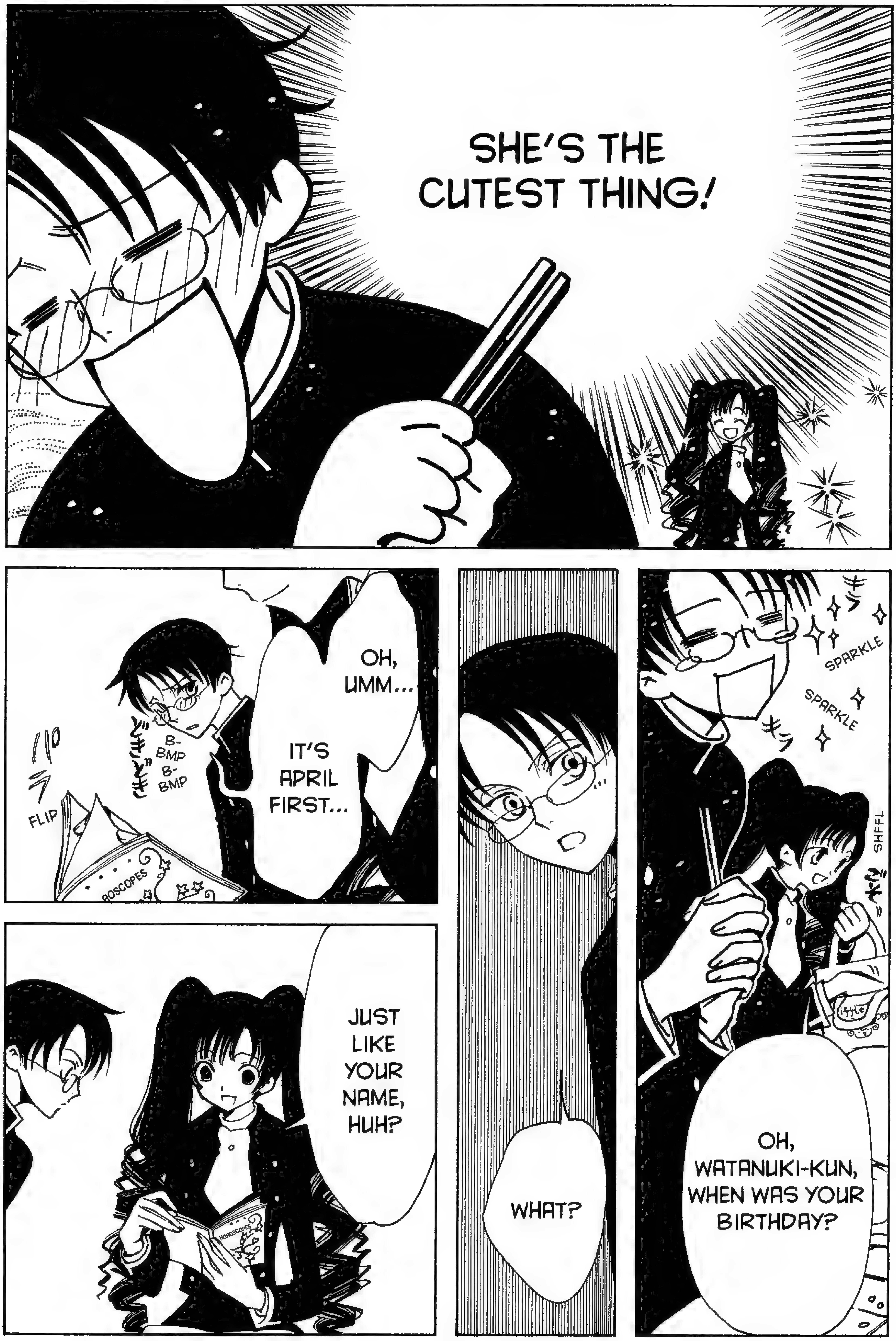

THEY'RE FROM DIFFERENT WORLDS, BUT THEIR SOULS ARE THE SAME.
SO, THEY'RE *SURE* TO BE ALL RIGHT.
BOTH CLOW AND I BELIEVE... AND THAT'S WHY WE MADE THE MOKONAS.
HUH?
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, "THEY'RE *SURE* TO BE ALL RIGHT"?
ふふっ
HA HA
THOSE WORDS ARE A TERRIBLE CURSE.

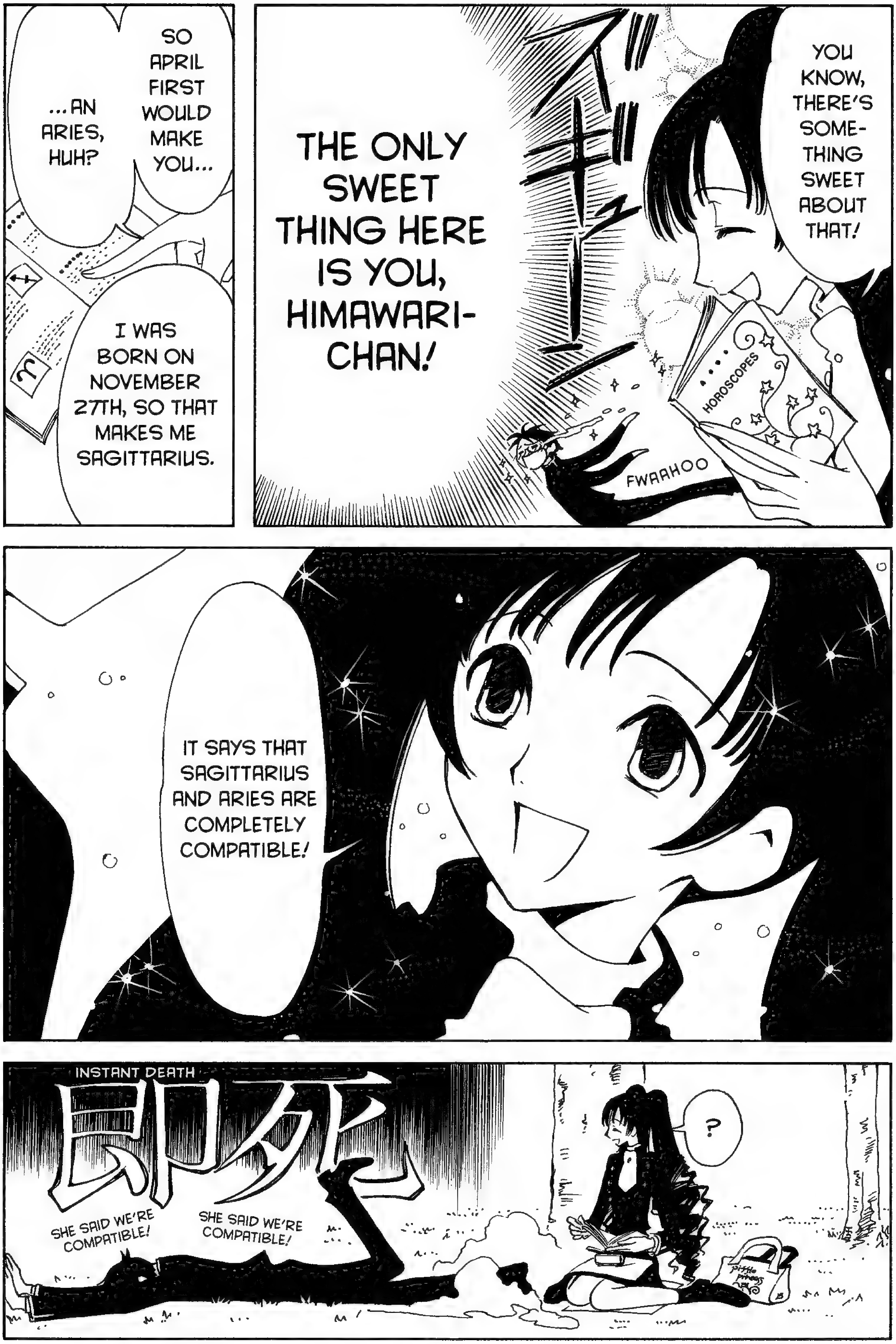

AND...
に
HEH
THE BIG GUY IN BLACK AND THE THIN GUY IN WHITE ARE GOING WITH THEM.
ONE'S A NINJA AND THE OTHER'S A WIZARD!
MARU, MORO..
TAKE THE SWORD AND MARKINGS TO THE TREASURE ROOM.
ぱたぱた
TMP TMP
OKAY! ♡
SO... NOW THAT WORK'S OVER, I COULD USE THE TRADITIONAL BEER!
WATANUKI, YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF THE MUNCHIES!
ん
MMMMMM
VSSH
BOINK
YOU MEAN I HAVE TO WAIT ON YOU AGAIN?
ぽんぽん
HOI HOI
にやり
GRIN
GET A BEER FOR MOKONA, TOO!
WAIT! THIS THING? DRINKS? BEER?!
FOOO
NOT "THING"! MOKONA!

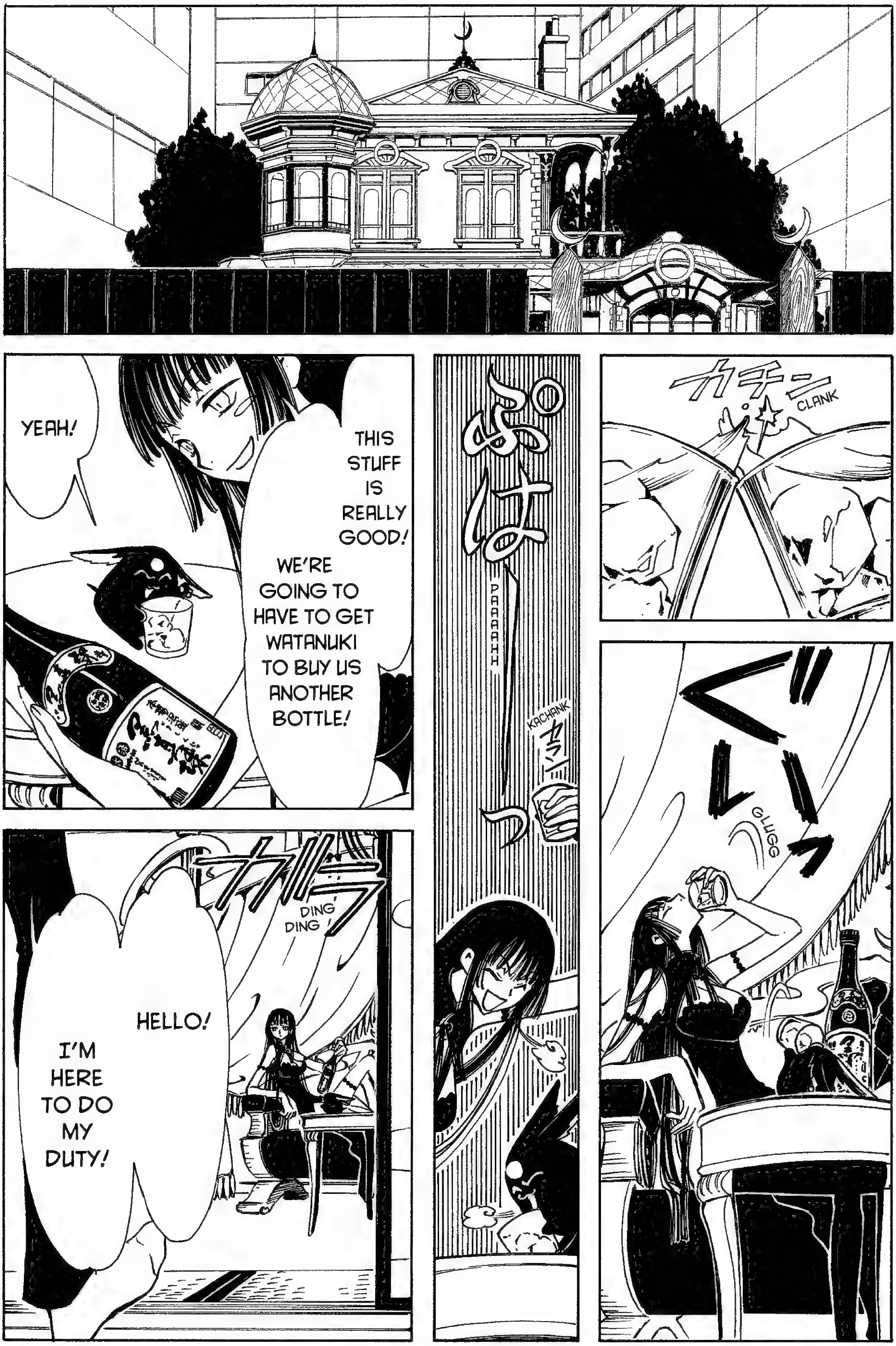

AND FROM NOW ON, MOKONA WILL BE WITH US IN THE SHOP. SO MAKE FRIENDS!
YO!
NICE TO MEET YA!
YOU MEAN *THIS* IS ANOTHER OF MY DUTIES?!
BABY-SITTING THIS BLACK PORK-BUN?
GEEZ!
BWOIN
BWOIN
AHH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
THIS IS NOTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT!

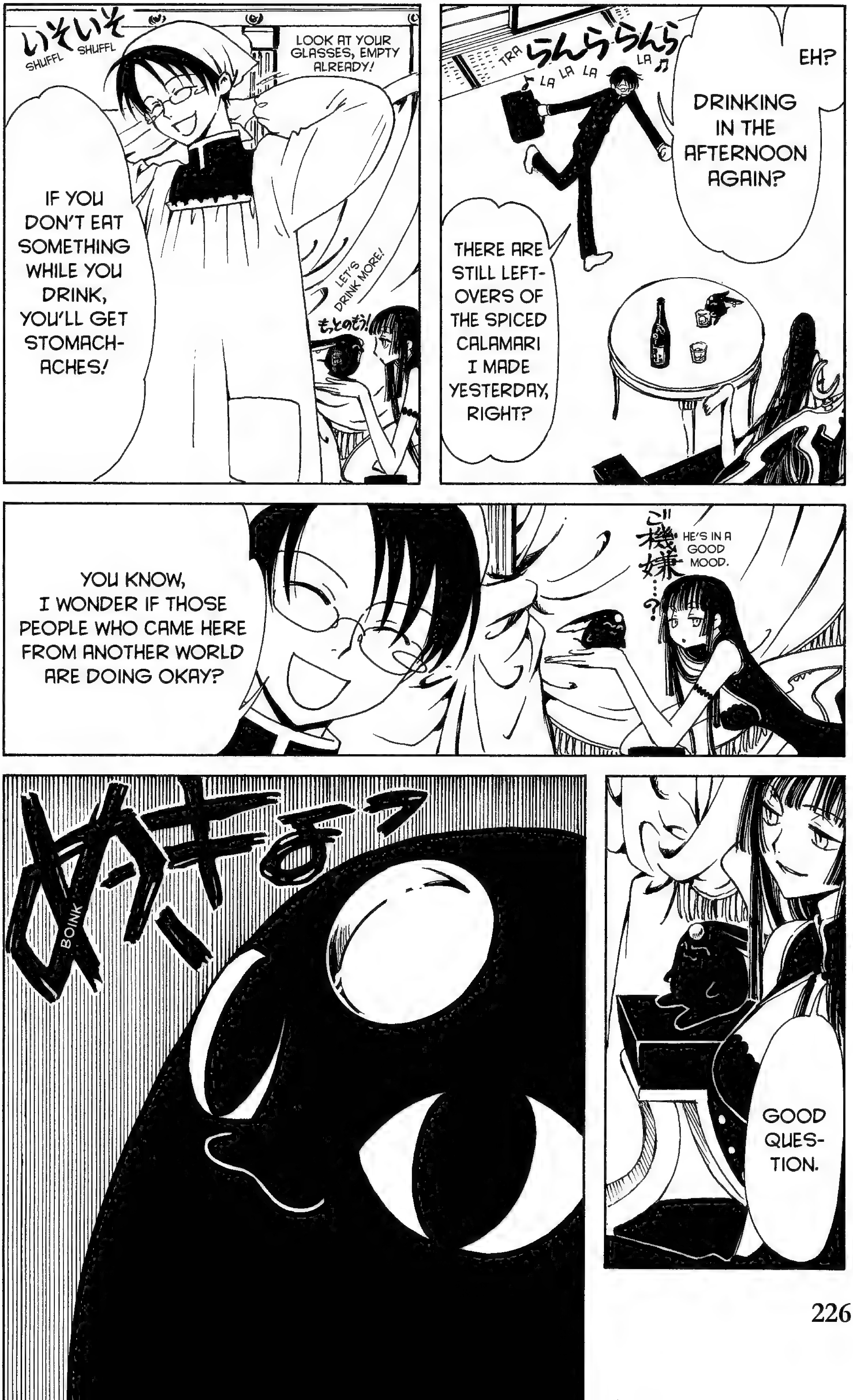
xxxHOLiC
～×××ホリック～

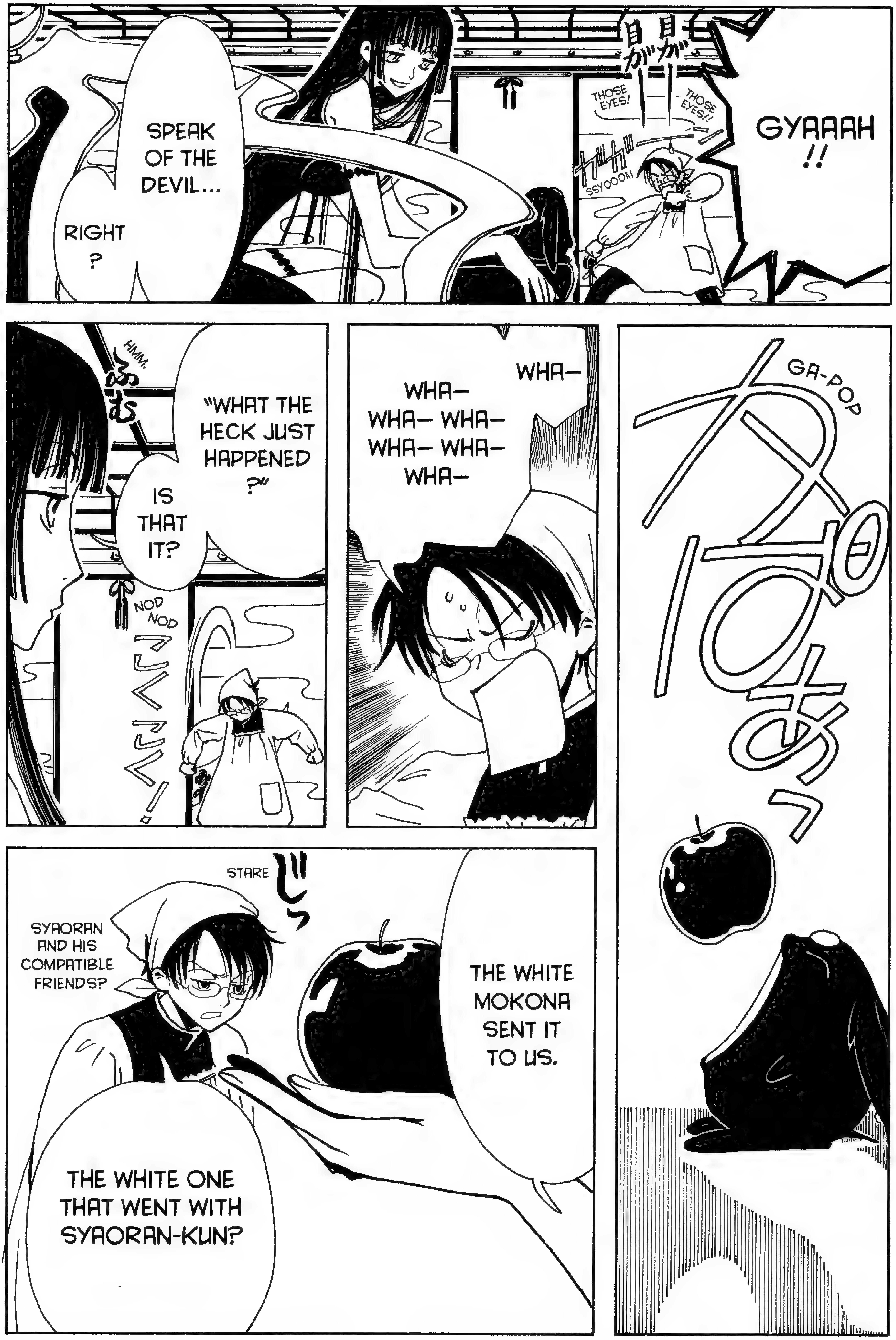

私立十字学園
CROSS PRIVATE SCHOOL
REALLY, WATANUKI-KUN, YOU'RE A *GREAT* COOK!
THIS EGG-FRY IS AMAZING!
WELL THIS BENTO BOX YOU BROUGHT IS REALLY GOOD, TOO!
THAT?
OH, I JUST BOUGHT THAT ON THE WAY HERE.
ALL I DID WAS HEAT IT UP.
YOU WHAT?!
NO...
I MEAN...
IT TASTES JUST HEAVENLY, SO...
THEN YOU MUST HAVE HEATED IT PERFECTLY!
WATANUKI-KUN, YOU'RE SO *NICE!!*
にこお
SMILE
SH–

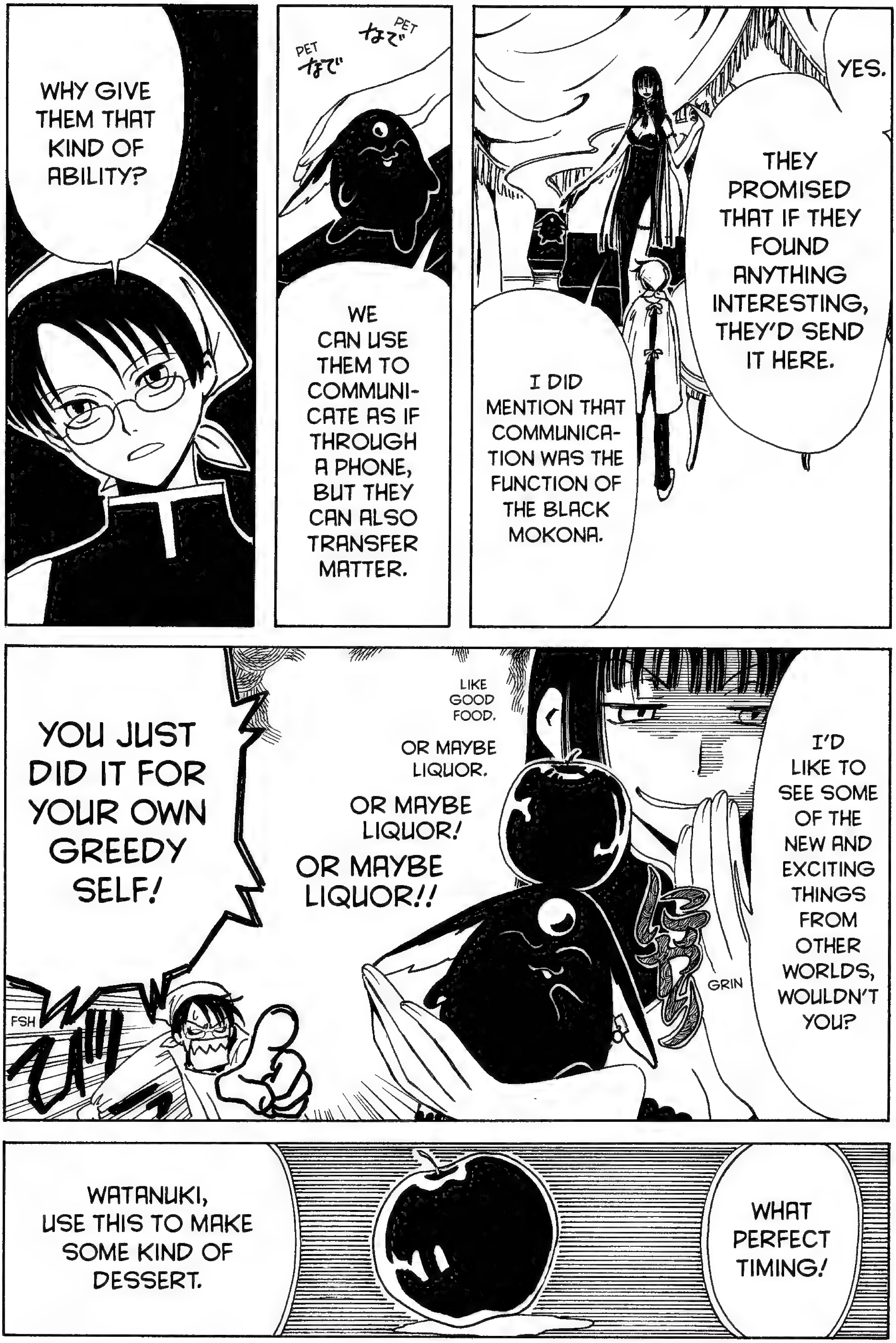

SHE'S THE CUTEST THING!
キラ
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
キラ
SHFFL
OH, WATANUKI-KUN, WHEN WAS YOUR BIRTHDAY?
WHAT?
OH, UMM...
IT'S APRIL FIRST...
B-BMP B-BMP
パラ
FLIP
ROSCOPES
JUST LIKE YOUR NAME, HUH?
HOROSCOPES

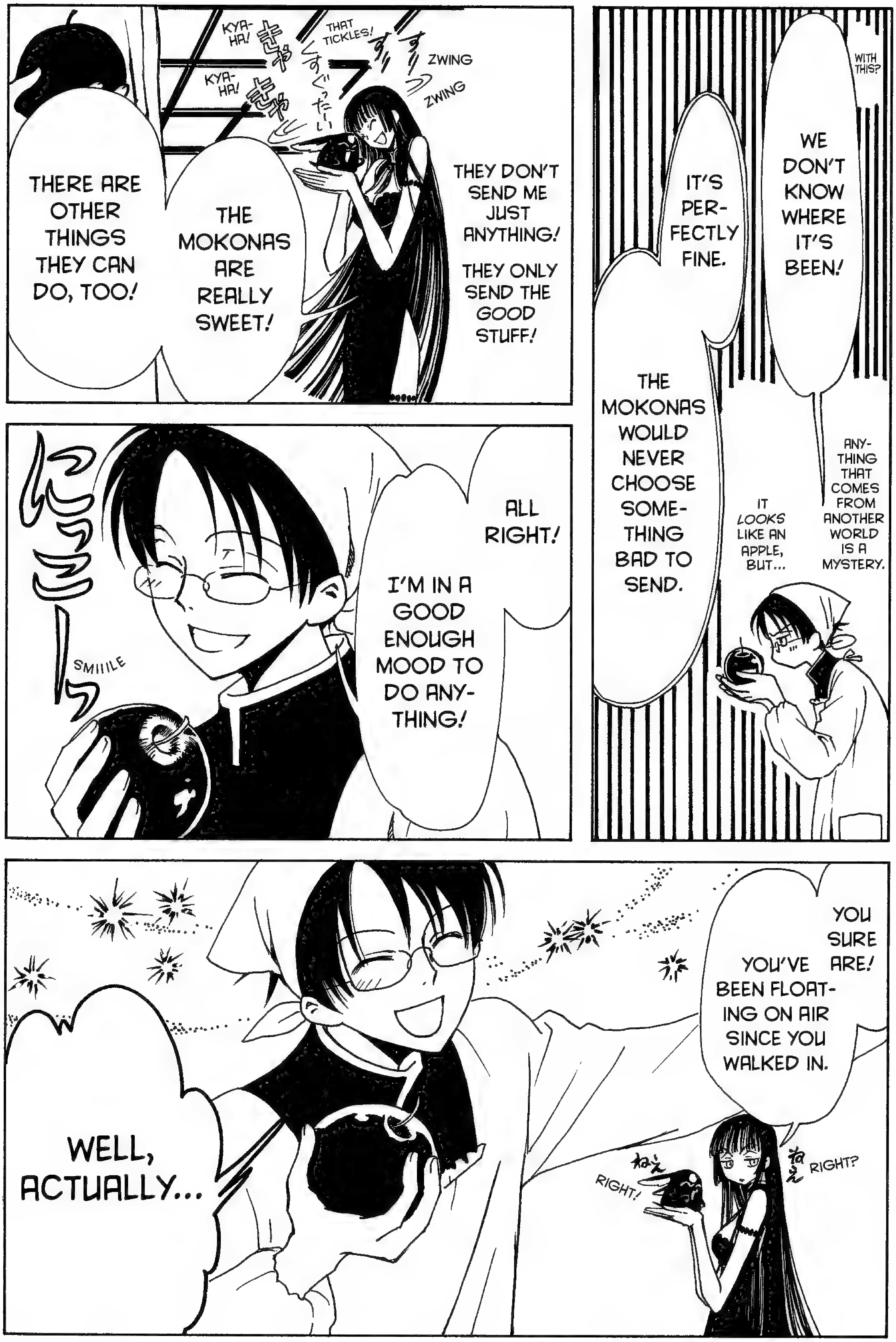

YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING SWEET ABOUT THAT!
HOROSCOPES
FWAAHOO
THE ONLY SWEET THING HERE IS YOU, HIMAWARI-CHAN!
SO APRIL FIRST WOULD MAKE YOU...
...AN ARIES, HUH?
I WAS BORN ON NOVEMBER 27TH, SO THAT MAKES ME SAGITTARIUS.
IT SAYS THAT SAGITTARIUS AND ARIES ARE COMPLETELY COMPATIBLE!
INSTANT DEATH
即死
?
SHE SAID WE'RE COMPATIBLE!
SHE SAID WE'RE COMPATIBLE!

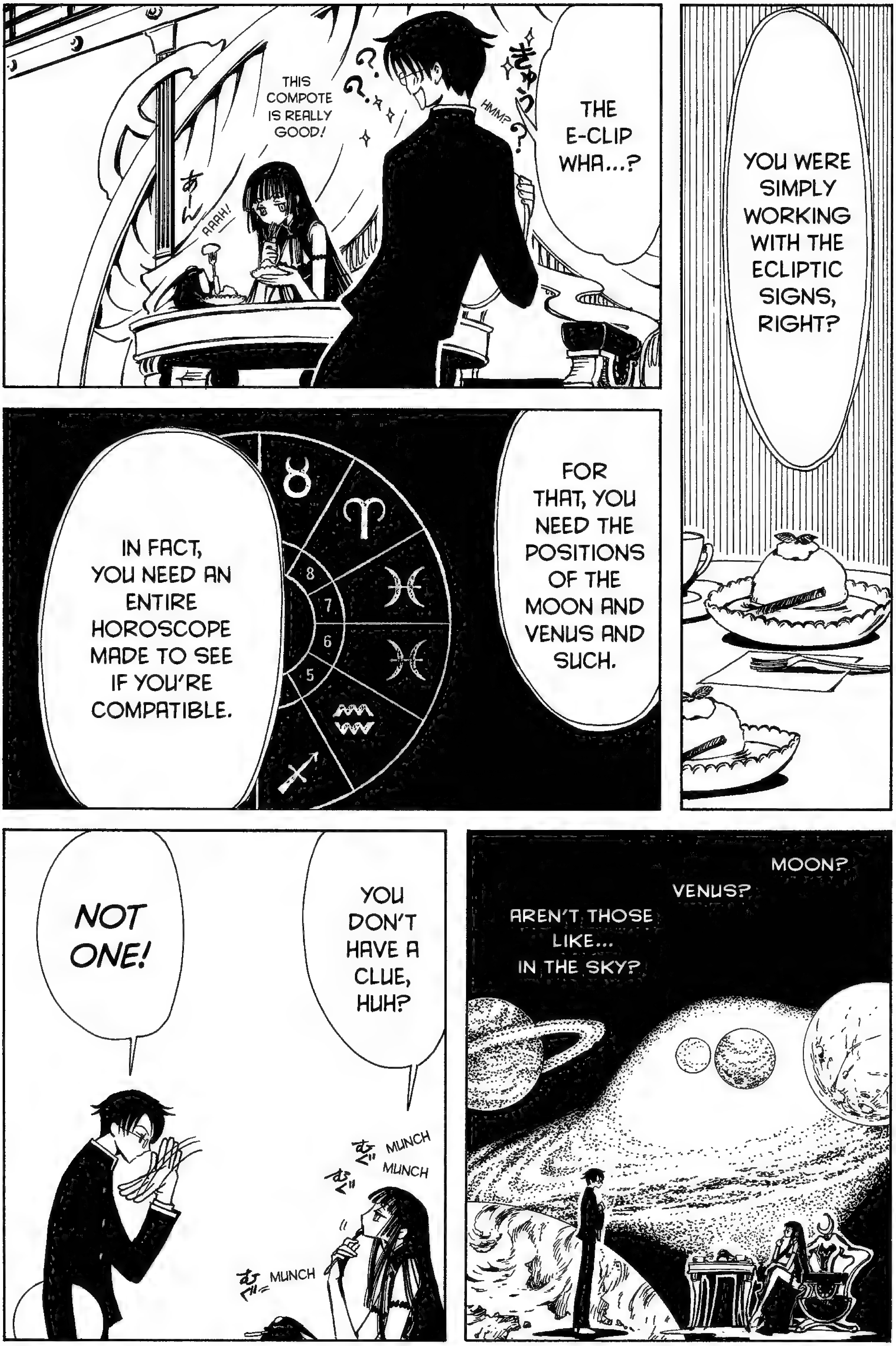

カチーン
CLANK
ぐびーっ
GLUGG
ぷはーっ
PAAAAHH
タン
KACHANK
THIS STUFF IS REALLY GOOD! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET WATANUKI TO BUY US ANOTHER BOTTLE!
YEAH!
カラン
DING DING
HELLO!
I'M HERE TO DO MY DUTY!

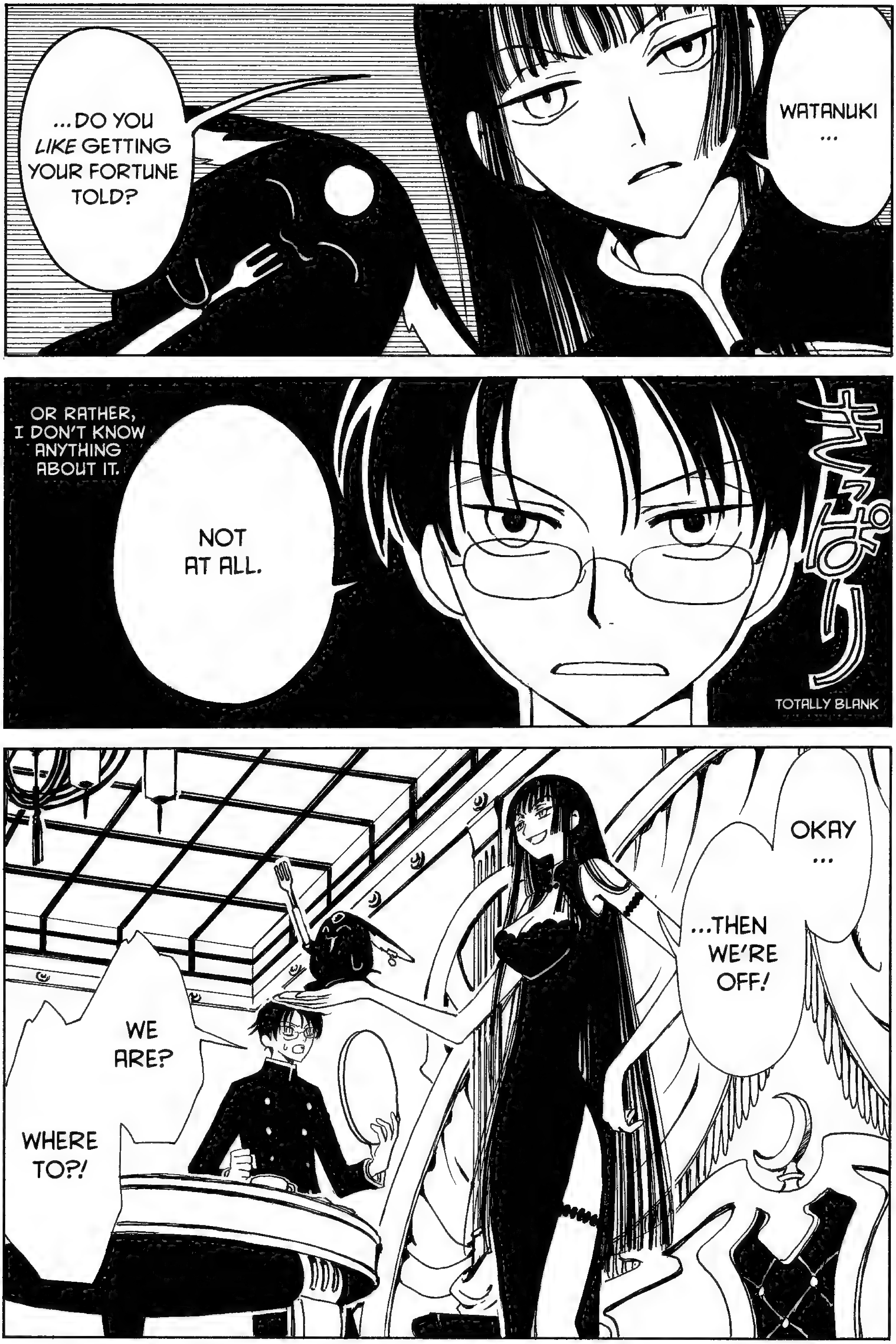

EH?
DRINKING IN THE AFTERNOON AGAIN?
らんららんら
TRA LA LA LA LA
THERE ARE STILL LEFT-OVERS OF THE SPICED CALAMARI I MADE YESTERDAY, RIGHT?
いそいそ
SHUFFL SHUFFL
LOOK AT YOUR GLASSES, EMPTY ALREADY!
IF YOU DON'T EAT SOMETHING WHILE YOU DRINK, YOU'LL GET STOMACH-ACHES!
もっとのもう!
LET'S DRINK MORE!
ご機嫌…?
HE'S IN A GOOD MOOD.
YOU KNOW, I WONDER IF THOSE PEOPLE WHO CAME HERE FROM ANOTHER WORLD ARE DOING OKAY?
GOOD QUESTION.
めきょっ
BOINK

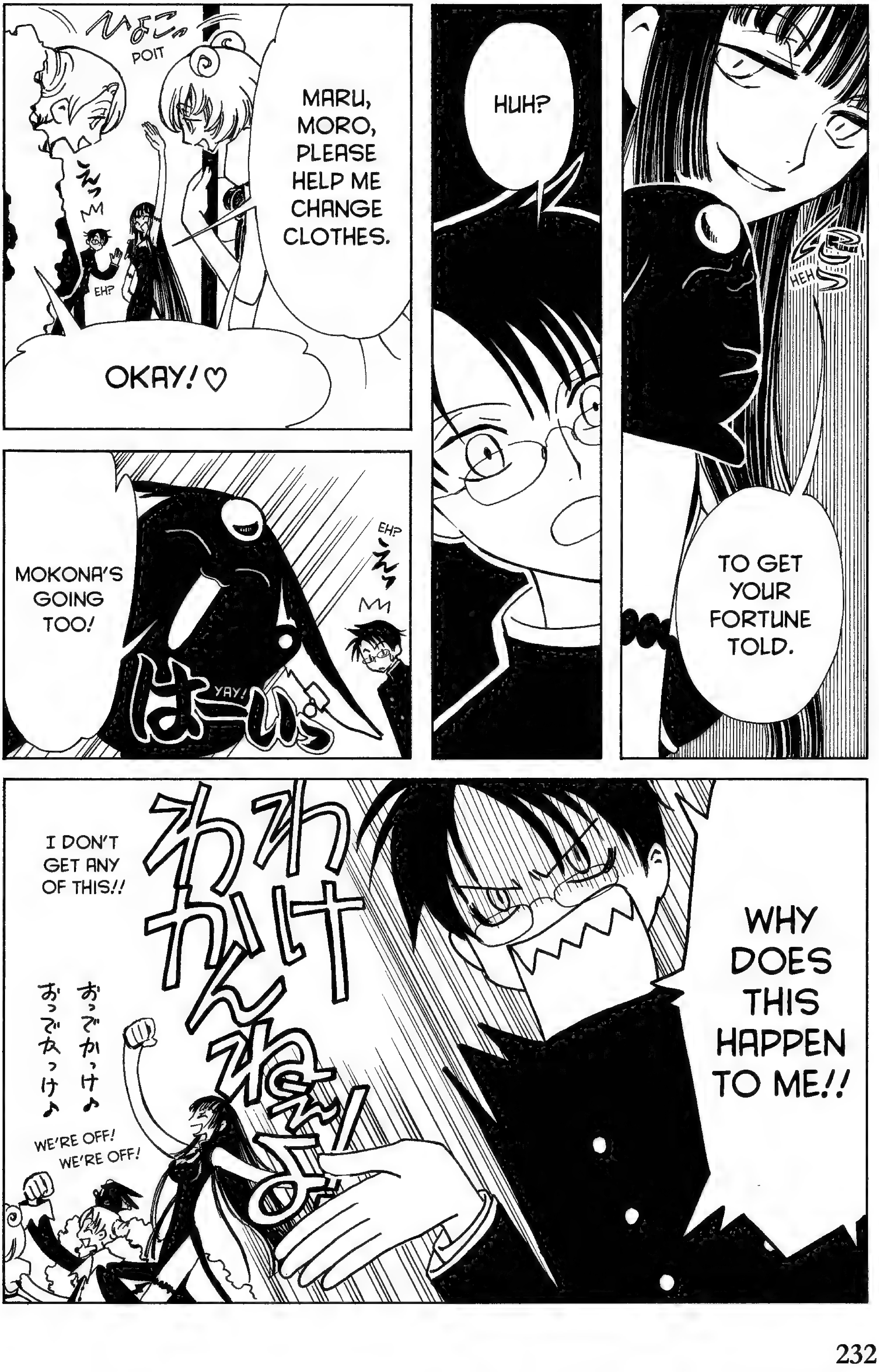

GYAAAH !!
目が目が!!
THOSE EYES!
THOSE EYES!!
ガガ
SSYOOOM
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL...
RIGHT?
かぱぁっ
GA-POP
WHA-
WHA- WHA- WHA- WHA- WHA- WHA-
"WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED?"
IS THAT IT?
ふむ
HMM.
こくこく!
NOD NOD
THE WHITE MOKONA SENT IT TO US.
じっ
STARE
THE WHITE ONE THAT WENT WITH SYAORAN-KUN?
SYAORAN AND HIS COMPATIBLE FRIENDS?


YES.
THEY PROMISED THAT IF THEY FOUND ANYTHING INTERESTING, THEY'D SEND IT HERE.
I DID MENTION THAT COMMUNICATION WAS THE FUNCTION OF THE BLACK MOKONA.
なで PET
なで PET
WE CAN USE THEM TO COMMUNICATE AS IF THROUGH A PHONE, BUT THEY CAN ALSO TRANSFER MATTER.
WHY GIVE THEM THAT KIND OF ABILITY?
I'D LIKE TO SEE SOME OF THE NEW AND EXCITING THINGS FROM OTHER WORLDS, WOULDN'T YOU?
GRIN
LIKE GOOD FOOD.
OR MAYBE LIQUOR.
OR MAYBE LIQUOR!
OR MAYBE LIQUOR!!
YOU JUST DID IT FOR YOUR OWN GREEDY SELF!
FSH
WHAT PERFECT TIMING!
WATANUKI, USE THIS TO MAKE SOME KIND OF DESSERT.

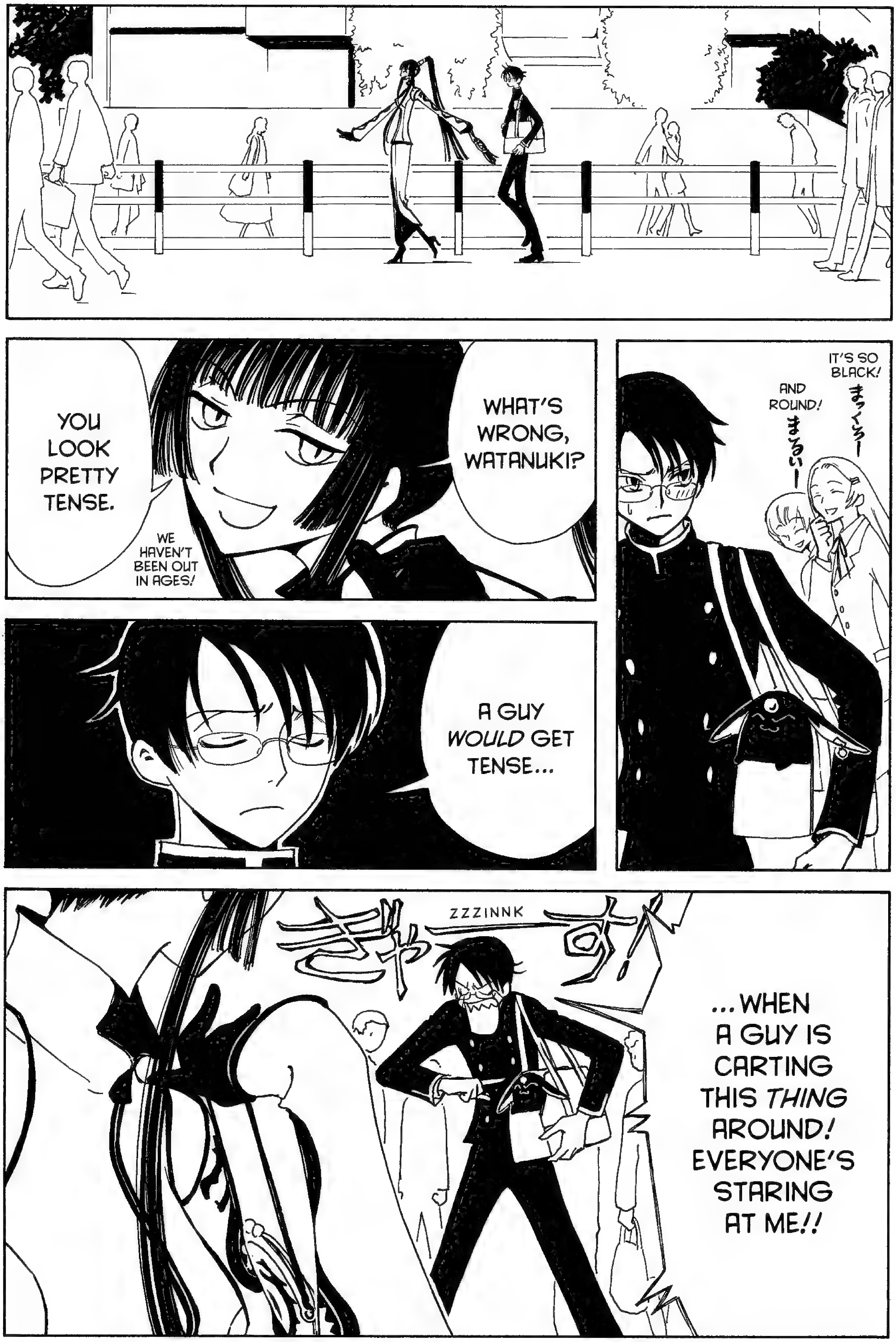

WITH THIS?
WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT'S BEEN!
IT'S PERFECTLY FINE.
THE MOKONAS WOULD NEVER CHOOSE SOMETHING BAD TO SEND.
ANYTHING THAT COMES FROM ANOTHER WORLD IS A MYSTERY.
IT *LOOKS* LIKE AN APPLE, BUT...
ZWING
ZWING
THEY DON'T SEND ME JUST ANYTHING!
THEY ONLY SEND THE *GOOD* STUFF!
くすぐったーい
THAT TICKLES!
きゃ
KYA-HA!
きゃ
KYA-HA!
THE MOKONAS ARE REALLY SWEET!
THERE ARE OTHER THINGS THEY CAN DO, TOO!
ALL RIGHT!
I'M IN A GOOD ENOUGH MOOD TO DO ANYTHING!
にっこーり
SMIIILE
YOU SURE ARE!
YOU'VE BEEN FLOATING ON AIR SINCE YOU WALKED IN.
ねえ
RIGHT?
ねえ
RIGHT!
WELL, ACTUALLY...

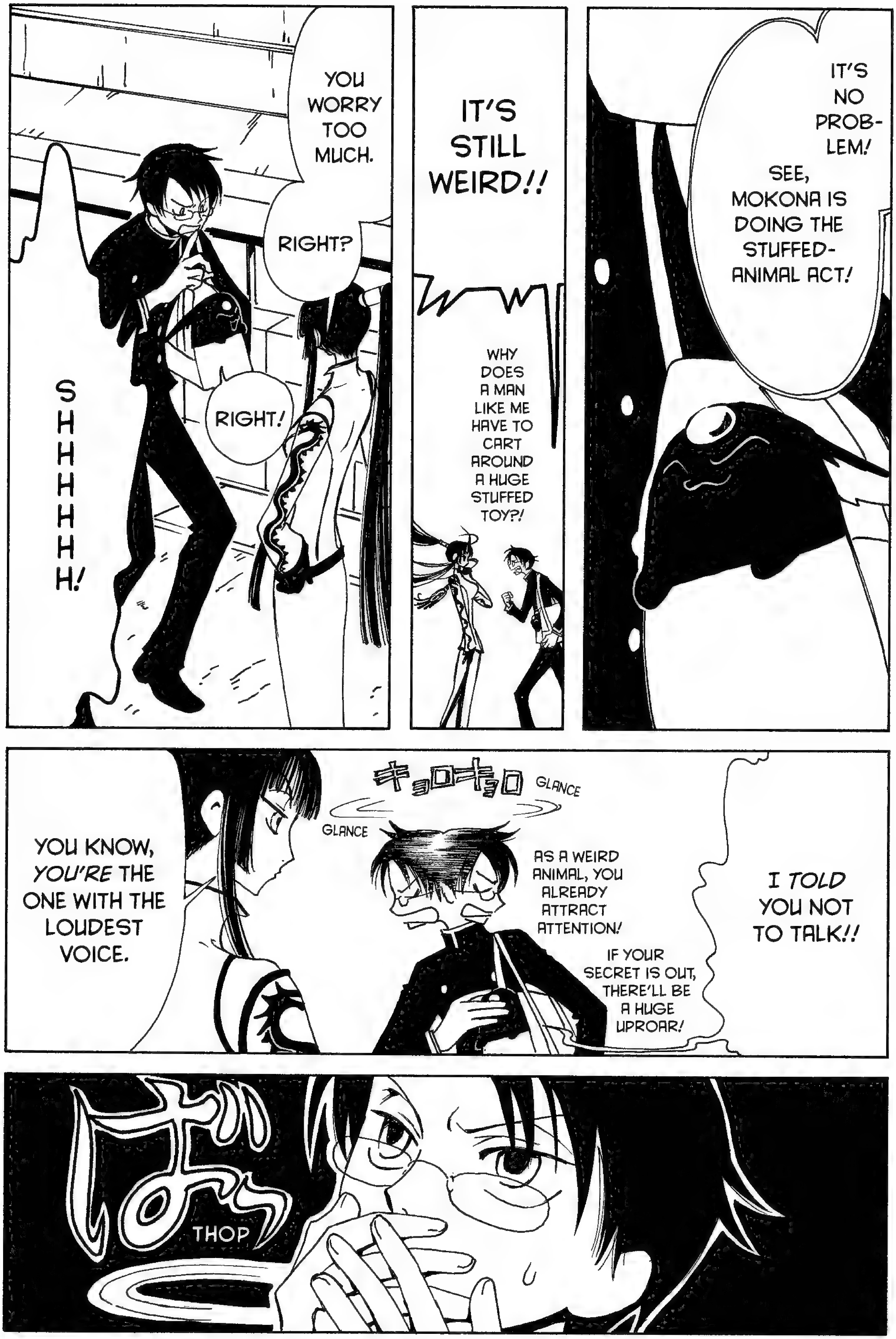

YOU WERE SIMPLY WORKING WITH THE ECLIPTIC SIGNS, RIGHT?
THE E-CLIP WHA...?
HMM?
THIS COMPOTE IS REALLY GOOD!
あーん
AAAH!
FOR THAT, YOU NEED THE POSITIONS OF THE MOON AND VENUS AND SUCH.
IN FACT, YOU NEED AN ENTIRE HOROSCOPE MADE TO SEE IF YOU'RE COMPATIBLE.
8
7
6
5
MOON?
VENUS?
AREN'T THOSE LIKE... IN THE SKY?
YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE, HUH?
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
NOT ONE!


WATANUKI ...
...DO YOU *LIKE* GETTING YOUR FORTUNE TOLD?
きっぱり
TOTALLY BLANK
NOT AT ALL.
OR RATHER, I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
OKAY ...
...THEN WE'RE OFF!
WE ARE?
WHERE TO?!

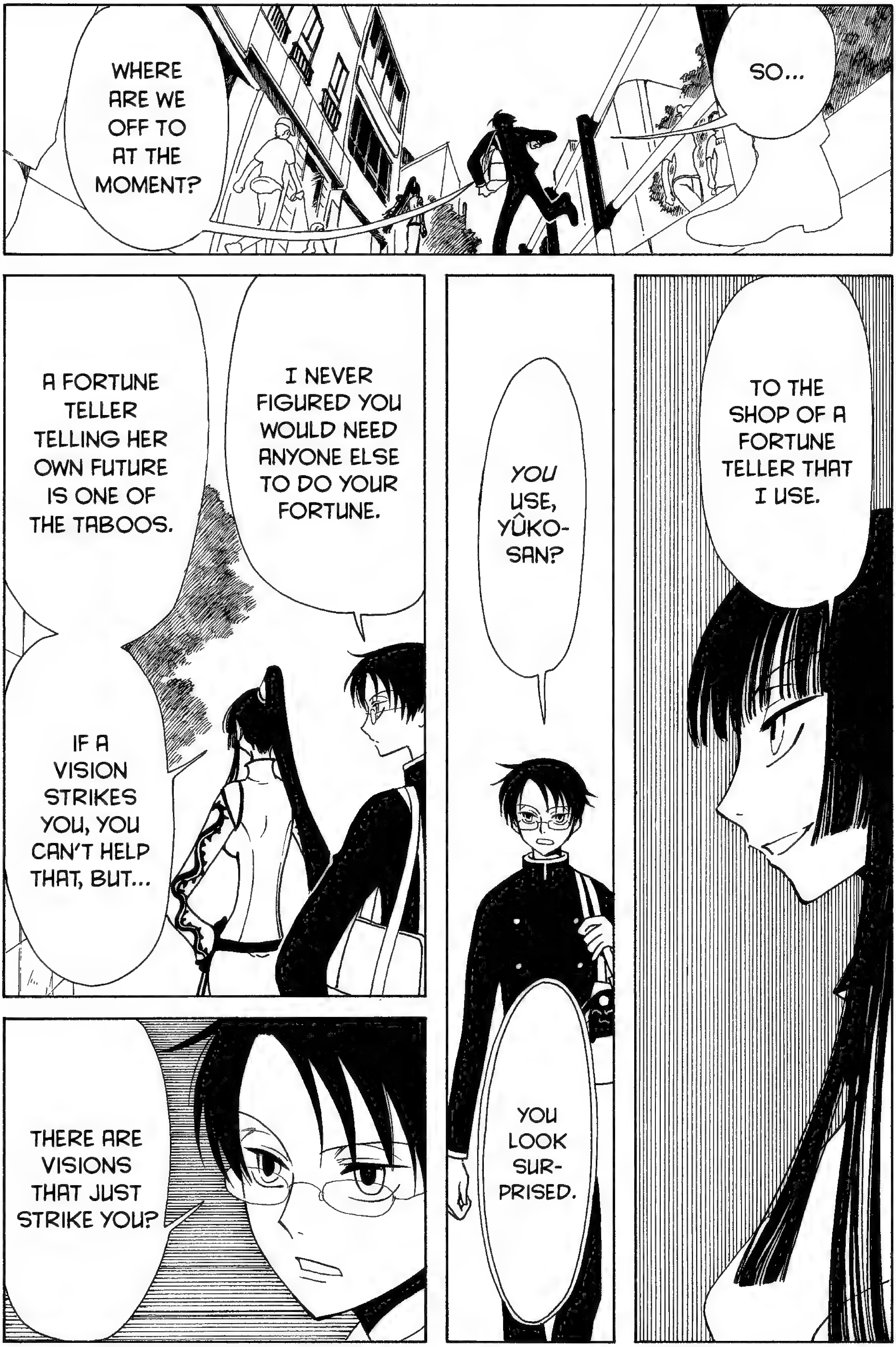

TO GET YOUR FORTUNE TOLD.
HEH
HUH?
MARU, MORO, PLEASE HELP ME CHANGE CLOTHES.
ひよこっ
POIT
えっ
EH?
OKAY! ♡
MOKONA'S GOING TOO!
はーいっ
YAY!
えっ
EH?
WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN TO ME!!
わけわかんねぇよ!
I DON'T GET ANY OF THIS!!
おっでかっけ♪
おっでかっけ♪
WE'RE OFF!
WE'RE OFF!

xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

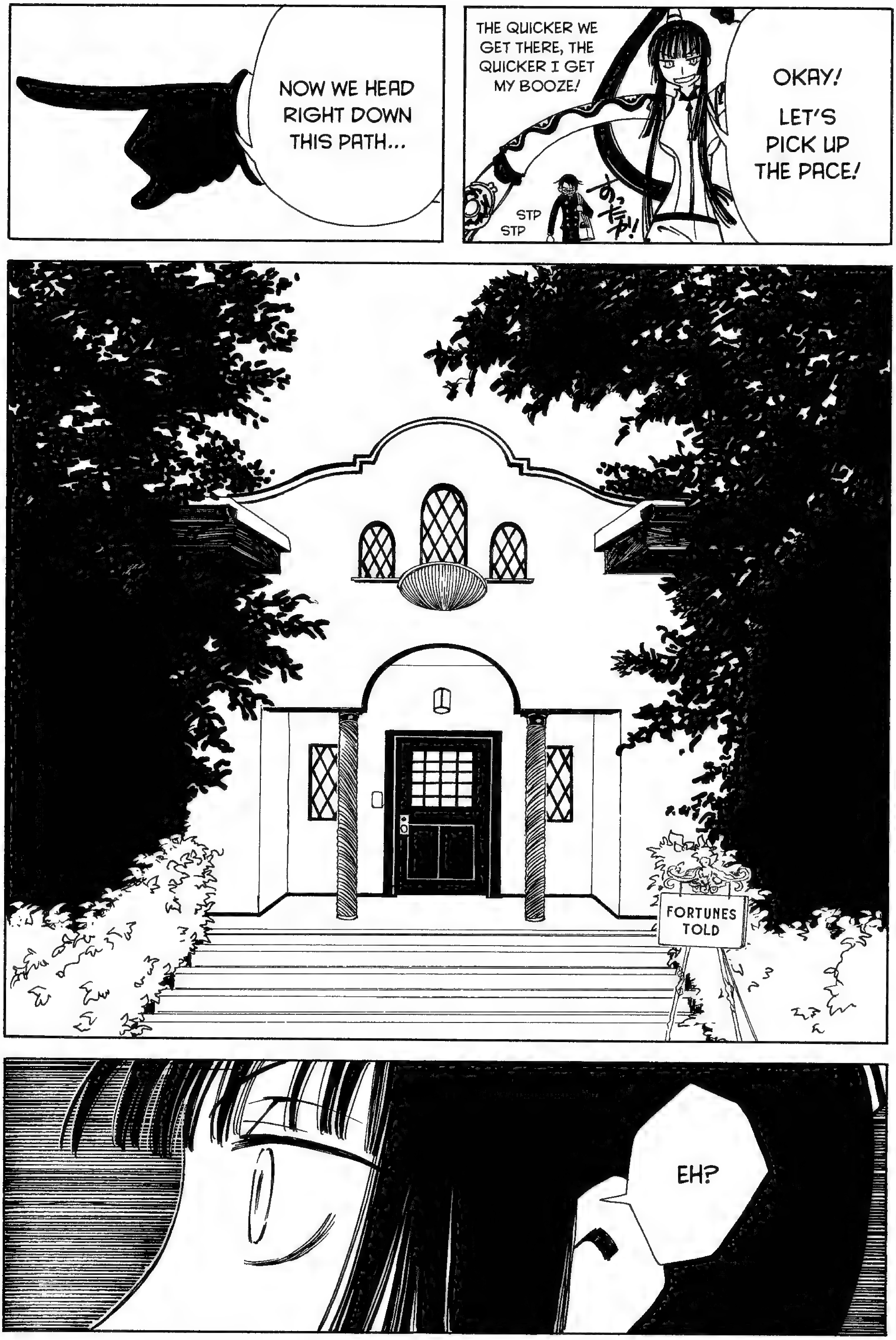

IT'S SO BLACK!
まっくろ～
AND ROUND!
まるい～
WHAT'S WRONG, WATANUKI?
YOU LOOK PRETTY TENSE.
WE HAVEN'T BEEN OUT IN AGES!
A GUY *WOULD* GET TENSE...
ZZZINNK
きゃーす!
...WHEN A GUY IS CARTING THIS *THING* AROUND! EVERYONE'S STARING AT ME!!

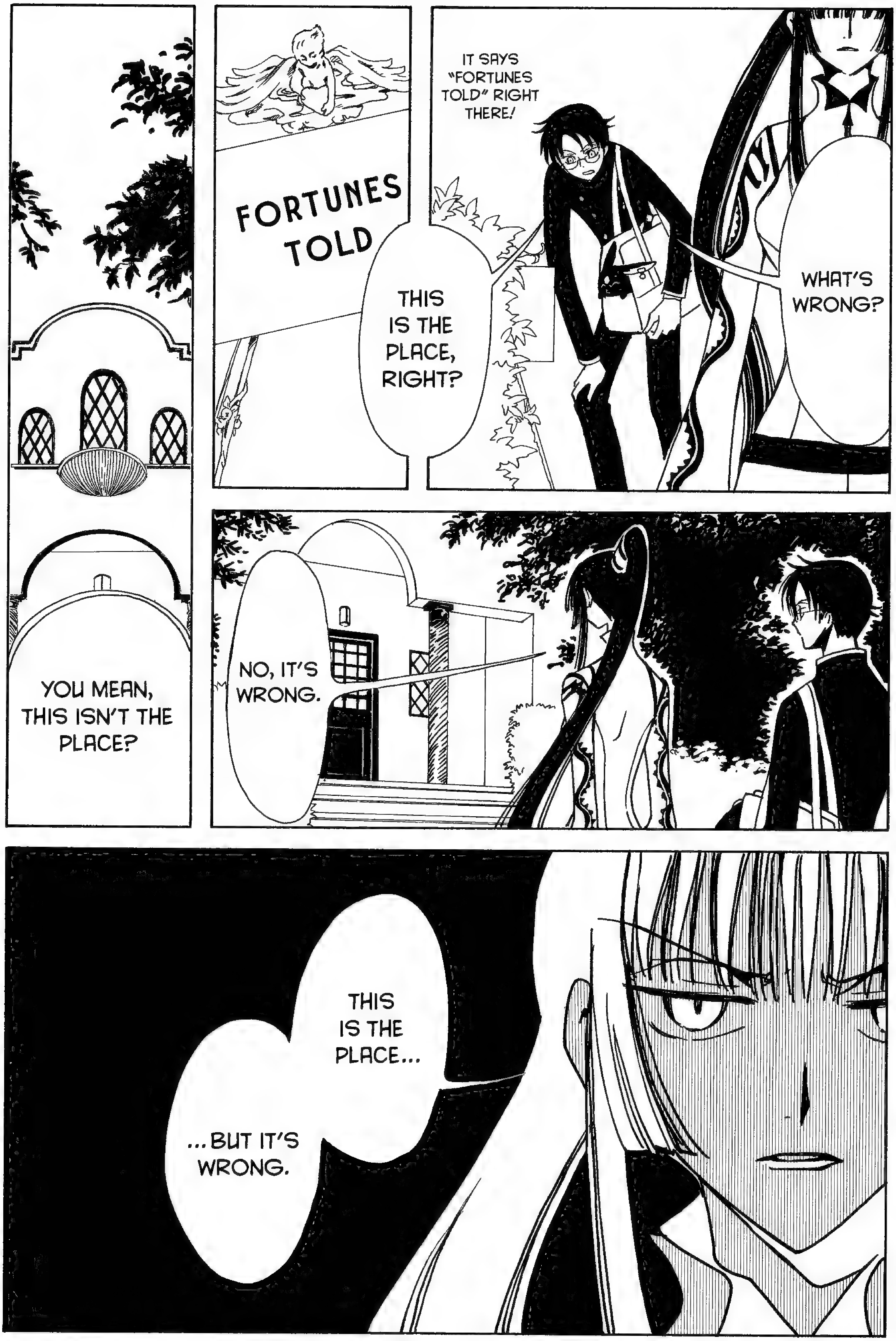

IT'S NO PROBLEM!
SEE, MOKONA IS DOING THE STUFFED-ANIMAL ACT!
IT'S STILL WEIRD!!
WHY DOES A MAN LIKE ME HAVE TO CART AROUND A HUGE STUFFED TOY?!
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH.
RIGHT?
RIGHT!
SHHHHHHH!
I *TOLD* YOU NOT TO TALK!!
AS A WEIRD ANIMAL, YOU ALREADY ATTRACT ATTENTION!
IF YOUR SECRET IS OUT, THERE'LL BE A HUGE UPROAR!
キョロキョロ
GLANCE
GLANCE
YOU KNOW, *YOU'RE* THE ONE WITH THE LOUDEST VOICE.
THOP

THEN …
…WHERE ARE WE GOING?
WE'RE GOING TO TEACH WATANUKI ABOUT JUST WHAT FORTUNE TELLING IS.
DUM
DUM
BUT I TOLD YOU THAT I WASN'T INTERESTED.
YOU'RE NOT, BUT CERTAIN *GIRLS* ARE…
…IN HOROSCOPES.
ふふん
HEH HEH HEH
IF YOU KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT IT, I'LL BET YOU COULD CONVERSE WITH HIMAWARI-CHAN FOR HOURS!
I IMAGINE AFTERWARD, YOU COULD TEACH HER A THING OR TWO.
GM
GM
GM
I'M READY TO LEARN!
ぱあ
PAAAA
キラキラ
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
THAT'S THE SMILE I WANT TO SEE, WATANUKI!
GWIP


SO...
WHERE ARE WE OFF TO AT THE MOMENT?
TO THE SHOP OF A FORTUNE TELLER THAT I USE.
YOU USE, YÛKO-SAN?
YOU LOOK SUR-PRISED.
I NEVER FIGURED YOU WOULD NEED ANYONE ELSE TO DO YOUR FORTUNE.
A FORTUNE TELLER TELLING HER OWN FUTURE IS ONE OF THE TABOOS.
IF A VISION STRIKES YOU, YOU CAN'T HELP THAT, BUT...
THERE ARE VISIONS THAT JUST STRIKE YOU?

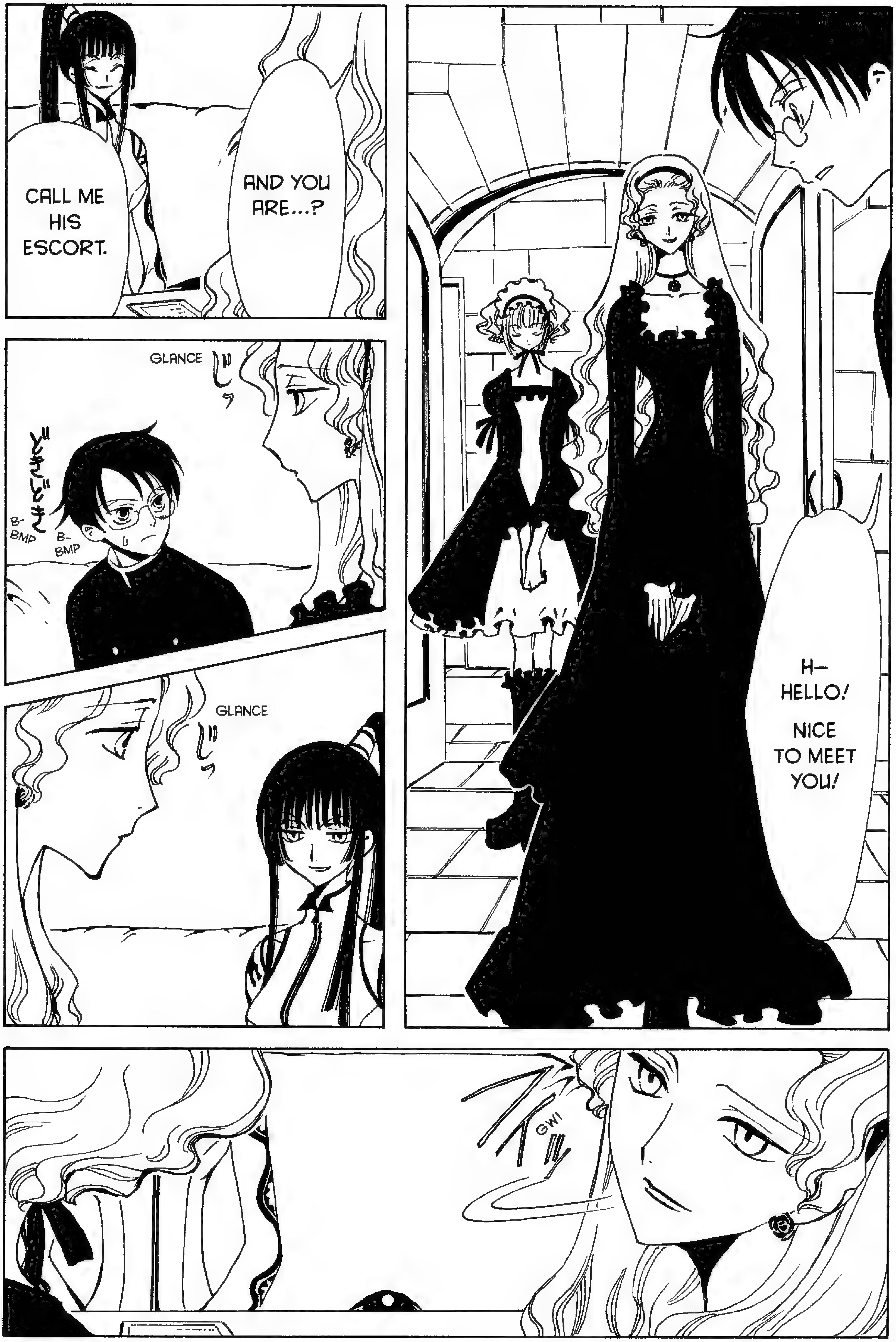
SURE. VISIONS OF THE FUTURE.
HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.
VISIONS ARE DIFFERENT FROM FORTUNE TELLING?
IN TERMS OF ACCURACY.
?
WHEN YOU MEET THE FORTUNE TELLER, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND.
IS THIS BOTTLE OF LIQUOR ...
IT'S A PRESENT!
AND, OF COURSE, I'LL GET SOME TOO!
YOU'RE GOING TO DRINK *AGAIN?!*
MOKONA WILL HAVE A GLASS TOO!


OKAY!
LET'S PICK UP THE PACE!
THE QUICKER WE GET THERE, THE QUICKER I GET MY BOOZE!
すったか!
STP STP
NOW WE HEAD RIGHT DOWN THIS PATH...
FORTUNES TOLD
EH?

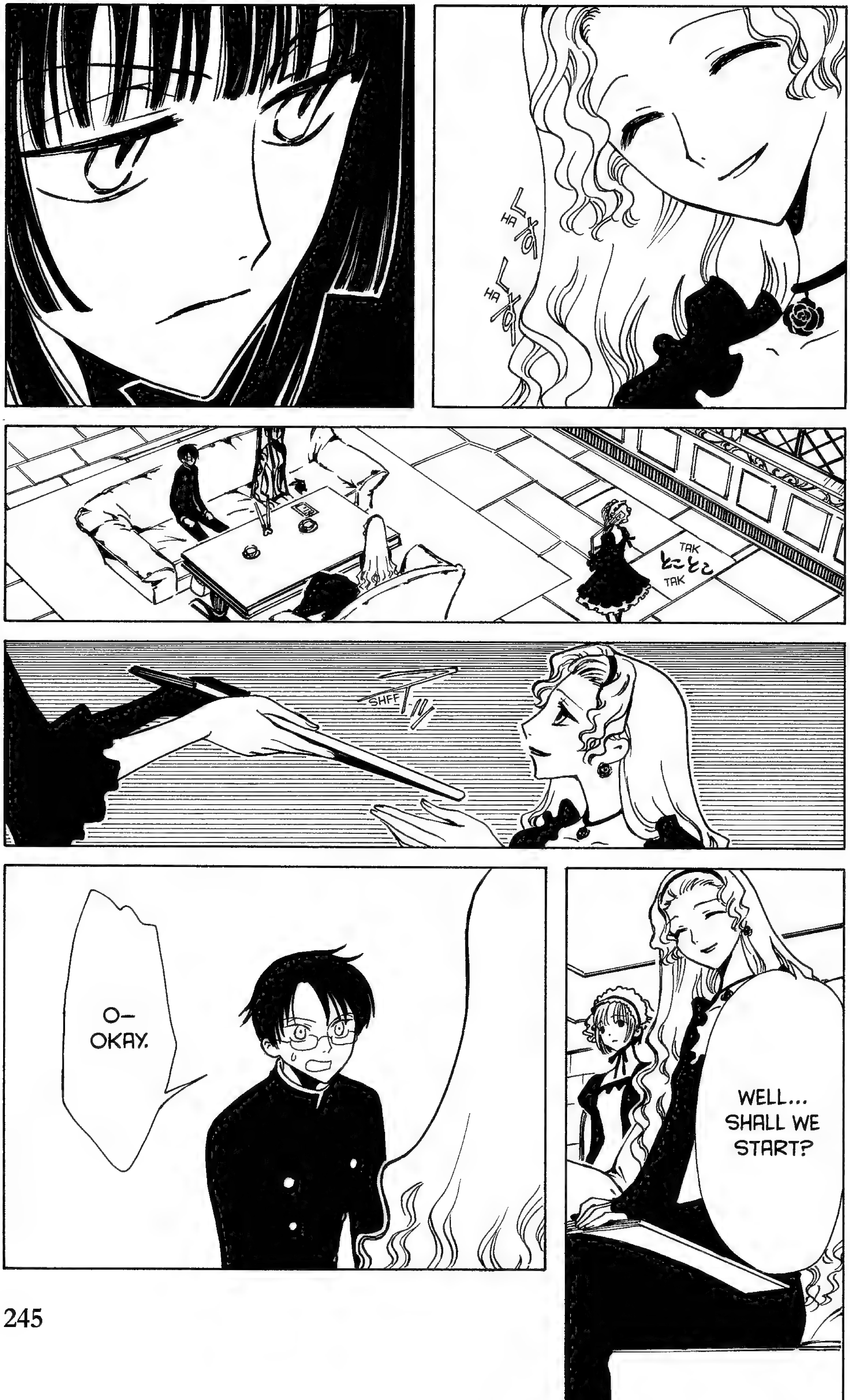

WHAT'S WRONG?
IT SAYS "FORTUNES TOLD" RIGHT THERE!
FORTUNES TOLD
THIS IS THE PLACE, RIGHT?
NO, IT'S WRONG.
YOU MEAN, THIS ISN'T THE PLACE?
THIS IS THE PLACE...
...BUT IT'S WRONG.

OOOKAY.
THEN LET'S GO HOME.
WE'LL GO IN.
HUH?
KACHAK
カチャ
BUT IF IT'S "WRONG"...
I WANT TO SEE...
...JUST WHO IS TELLING FORTUNES IN MY FORTUNE TELLER'S PLACE.

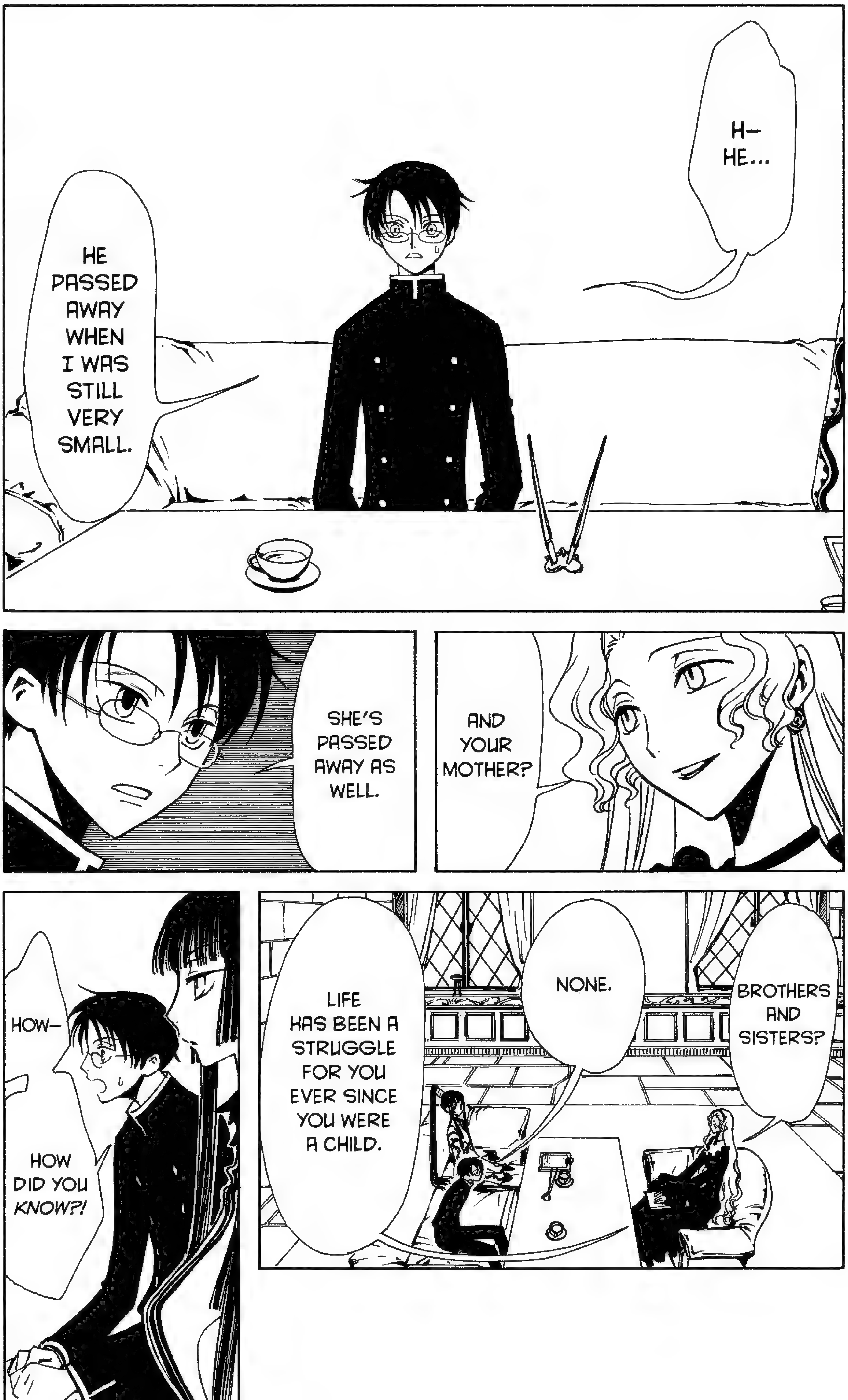
WHAT...
...IS THIS?
NAME
GENDER
PLACE OF RESIDENCE
MAILING ADDRESS
PLACE OF BIRTH
DATE AND TIME OF BIRTH
YOU WRITE DOWN YOUR BIRTHDAY AND THE LIKE.
FORTUNE TELLERS NEED THAT KIND OF DATA.
SHOULD I WRITE MY REAL INFORMATION?
DO WHAT YOU LIKE.
BUT EVEN IF YOU WRITE IN A LIE AS A JOKE, THE FORTUNE IS DRAWN FROM THAT LIE.
YOU'LL SIMPLY HAVE TO BE PREPARED FOR THE *RISKS* IN THAT.
URK!
I'LL WRITE MY REAL INFO.
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
TAK

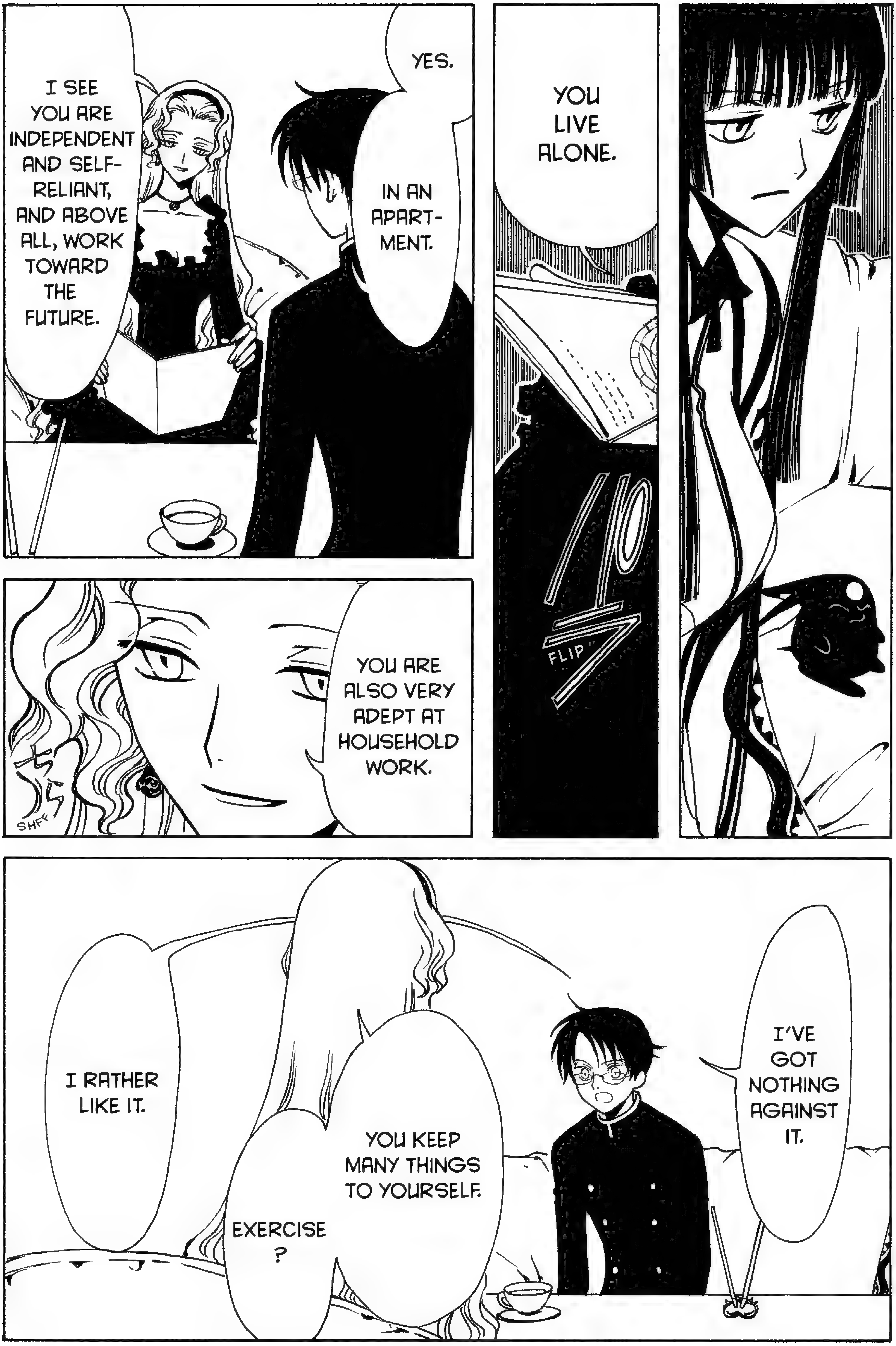

H— HELLO!
NICE TO MEET YOU!
AND YOU ARE...?
CALL ME HIS ESCORT.
じっ
GLANCE
どきどき
B-BMP B-BMP
じっ
GLANCE
GWI

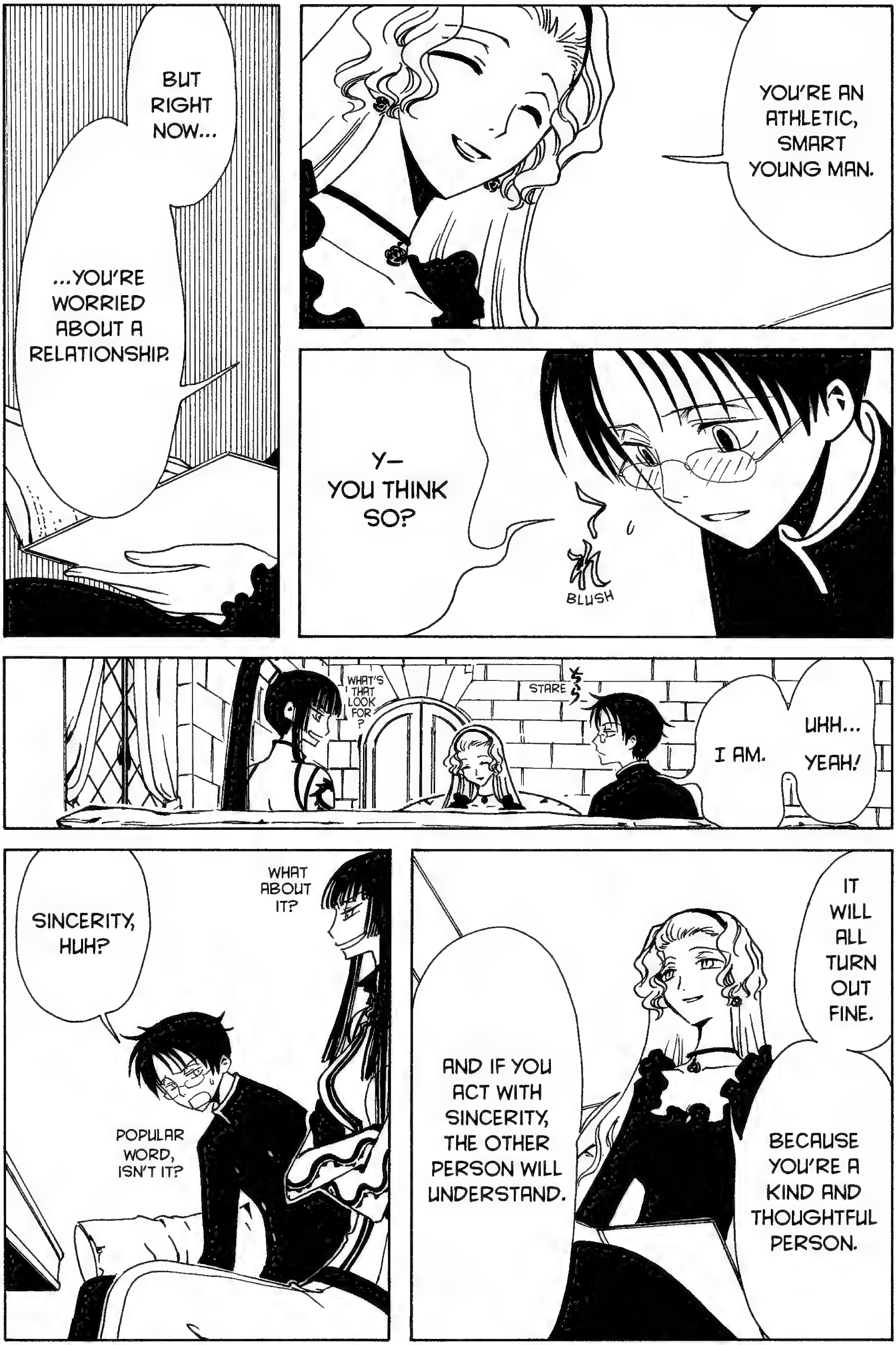
.....
SHFF
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE NERVOUS.
HM?
SHE SEEMS LIKE SUCH A NICE PERSON!
THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF YÛKO-SAN!
AH!
I HEARD THAT!
HA HA HA
DAMN! MY INNER VOICE...
...BECAME AN OUTER VOICE BY MISTAKE!

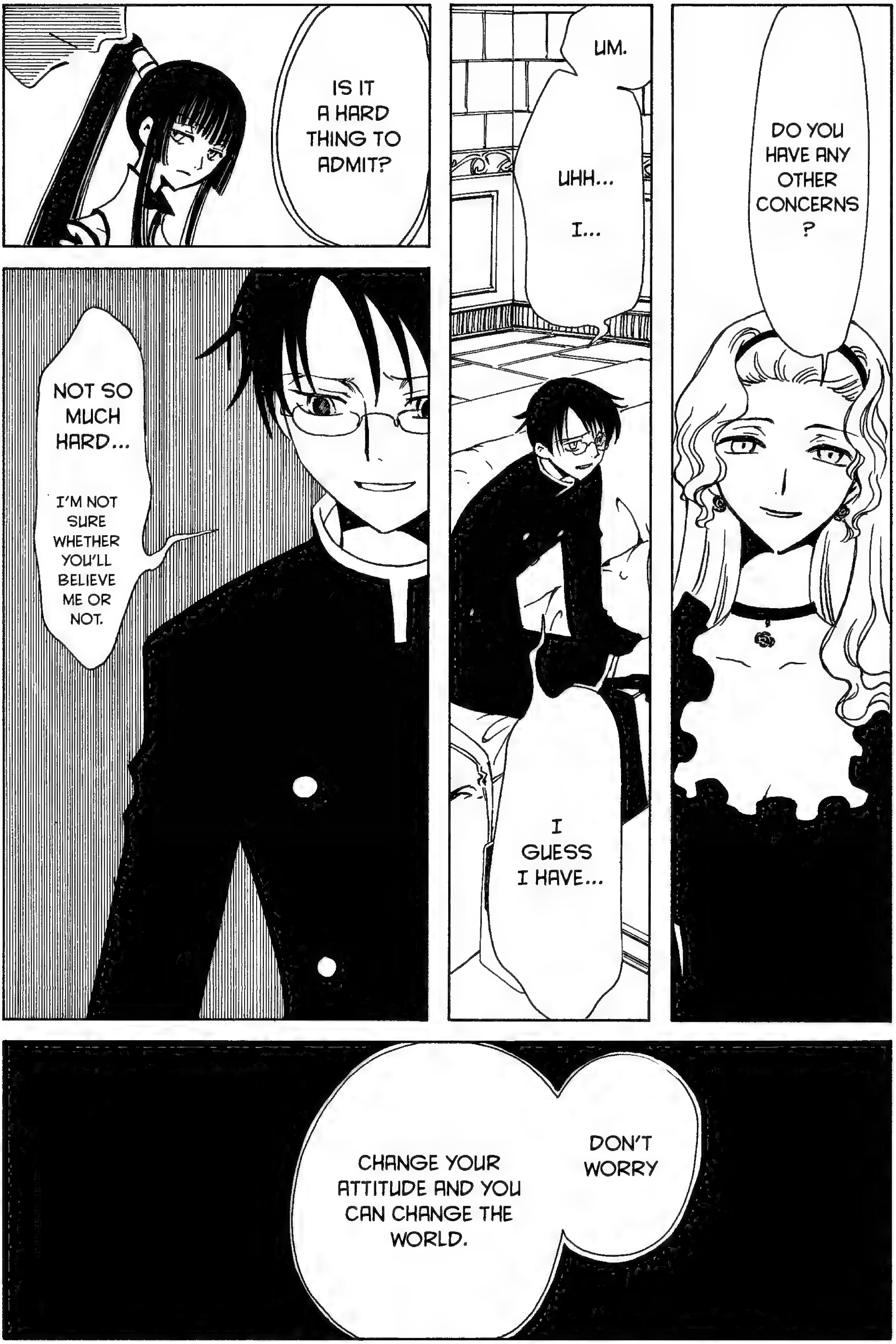

しな HA
しな HA
とことこ TAK TAK
SHFF
WELL... SHALL WE START?
O-OKAY.

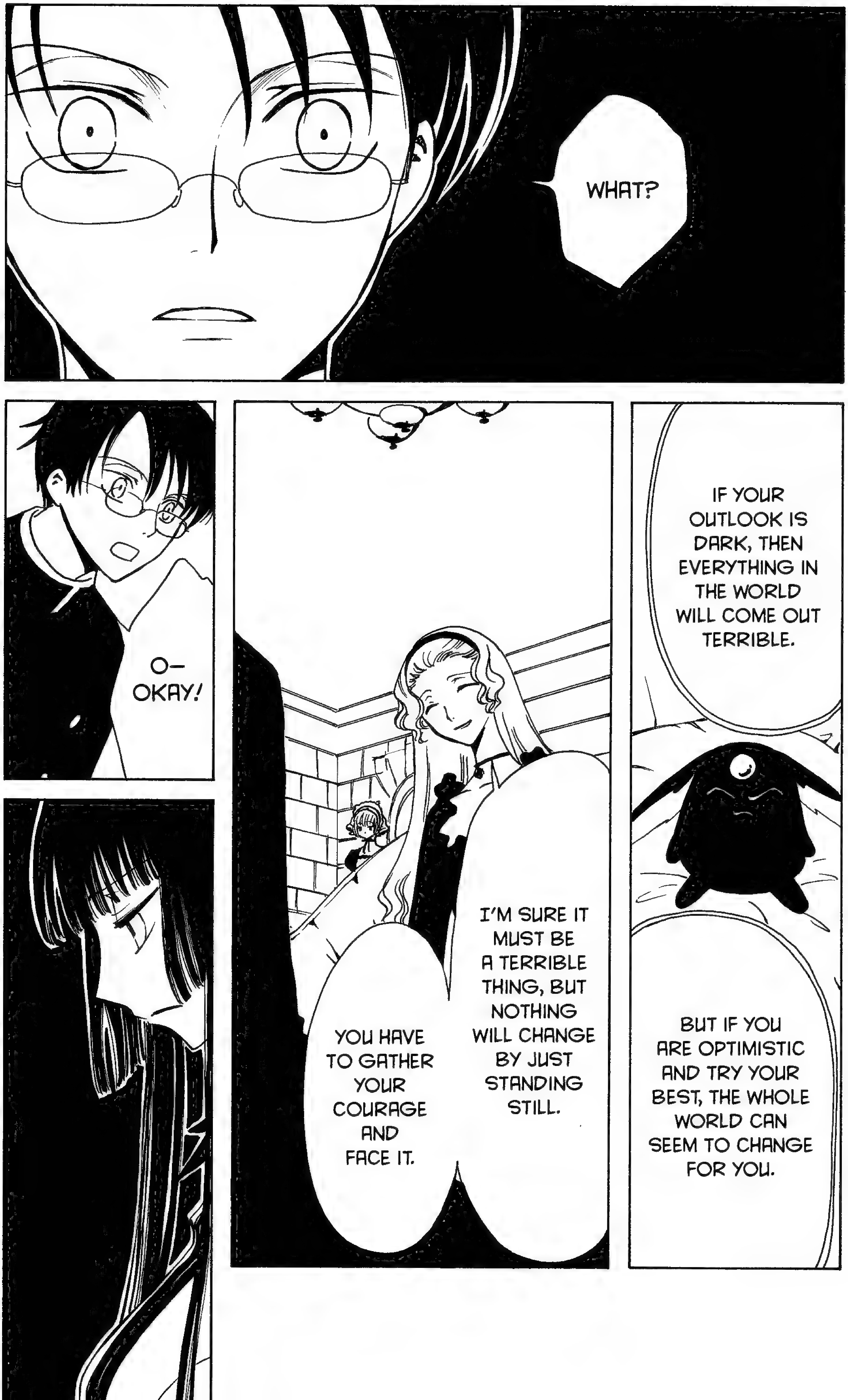
YOUR FATHER... AMONG THE LIVING?
EH?!


H— HE...
HE PASSED AWAY WHEN I WAS STILL VERY SMALL.
AND YOUR MOTHER?
SHE'S PASSED AWAY AS WELL.
BROTHERS AND SISTERS?
NONE.
LIFE HAS BEEN A STRUGGLE FOR YOU EVER SINCE YOU WERE A CHILD.
HOW—
HOW DID YOU *KNOW?!*

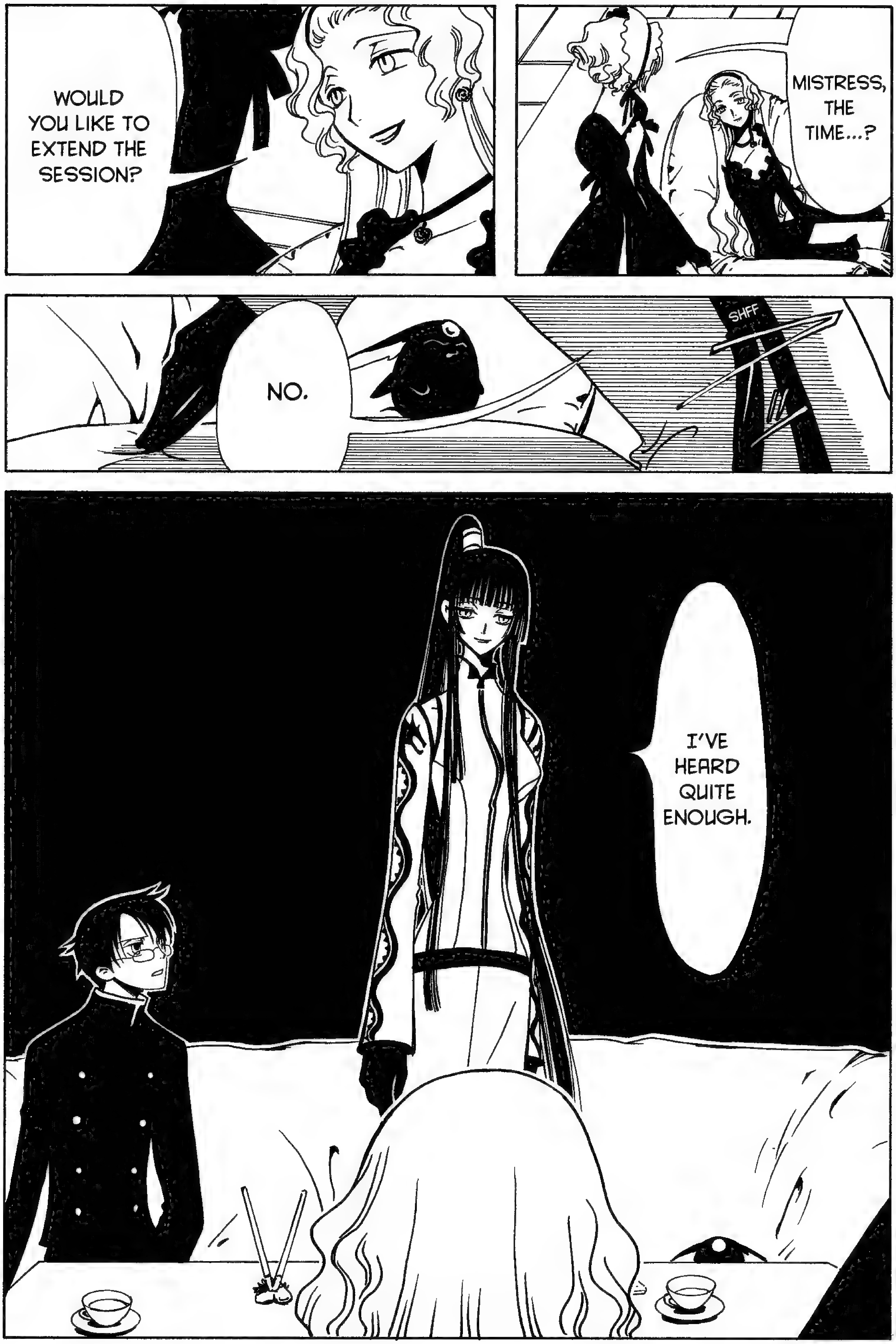

YOU LIVE ALONE.
FLIP
YES.
IN AN APARTMENT.
I SEE YOU ARE INDEPENDENT AND SELF-RELIANT, AND ABOVE ALL, WORK TOWARD THE FUTURE.
YOU ARE ALSO VERY ADEPT AT HOUSEHOLD WORK.
SHFF
I'VE GOT NOTHING AGAINST IT.
YOU KEEP MANY THINGS TO YOURSELF.
EXERCISE?
I RATHER LIKE IT.

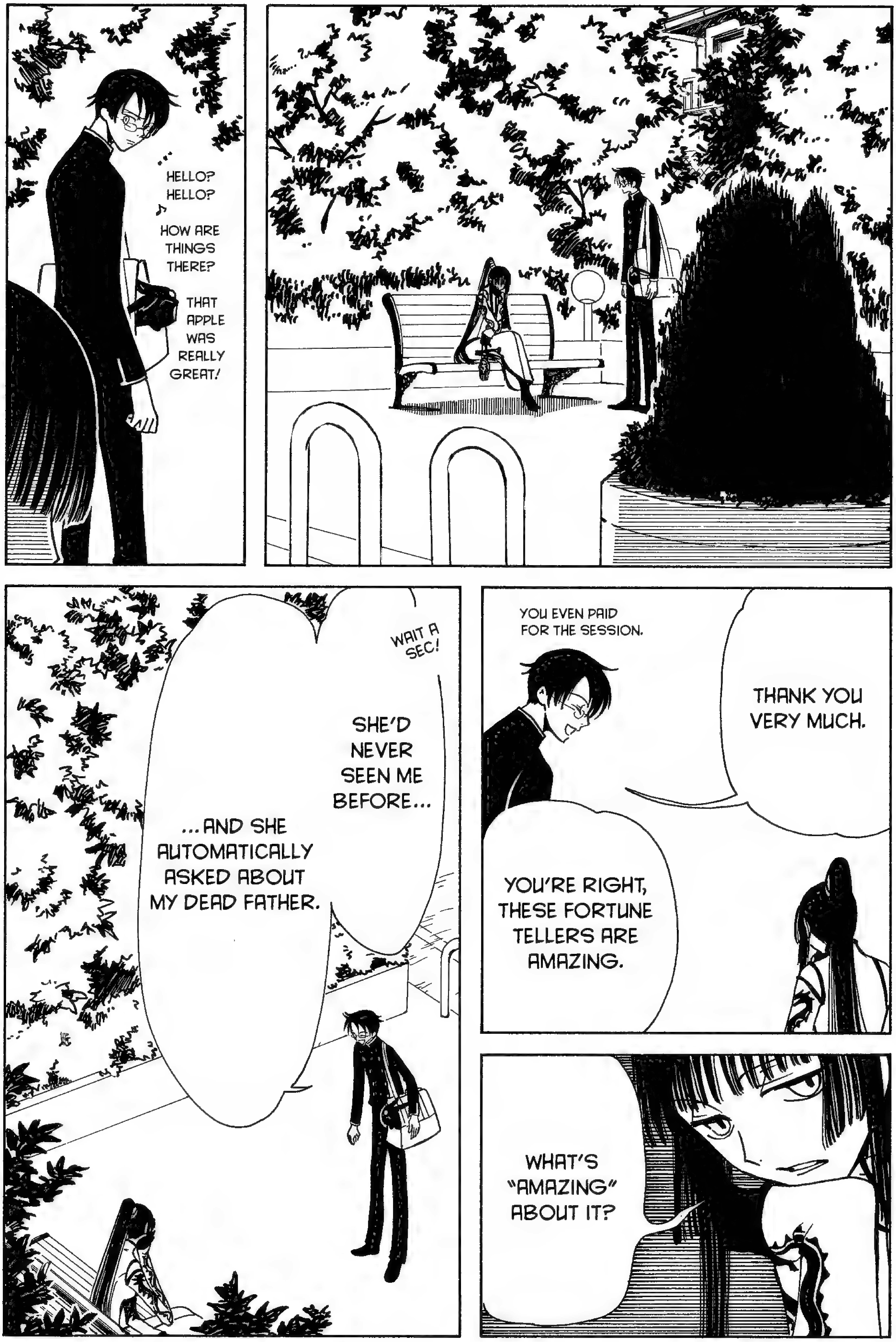

YOU'RE AN ATHLETIC, SMART YOUNG MAN.
Y— YOU THINK SO?
BLUSH
BUT RIGHT NOW...
...YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP.
UHH... YEAH! I AM.
STARE
WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?
IT WILL ALL TURN OUT FINE.
BECAUSE YOU'RE A KIND AND THOUGHTFUL PERSON.
AND IF YOU ACT WITH SINCERITY, THE OTHER PERSON WILL UNDERSTAND.
WHAT ABOUT IT?
SINCERITY, HUH?
POPULAR WORD, ISN'T IT?

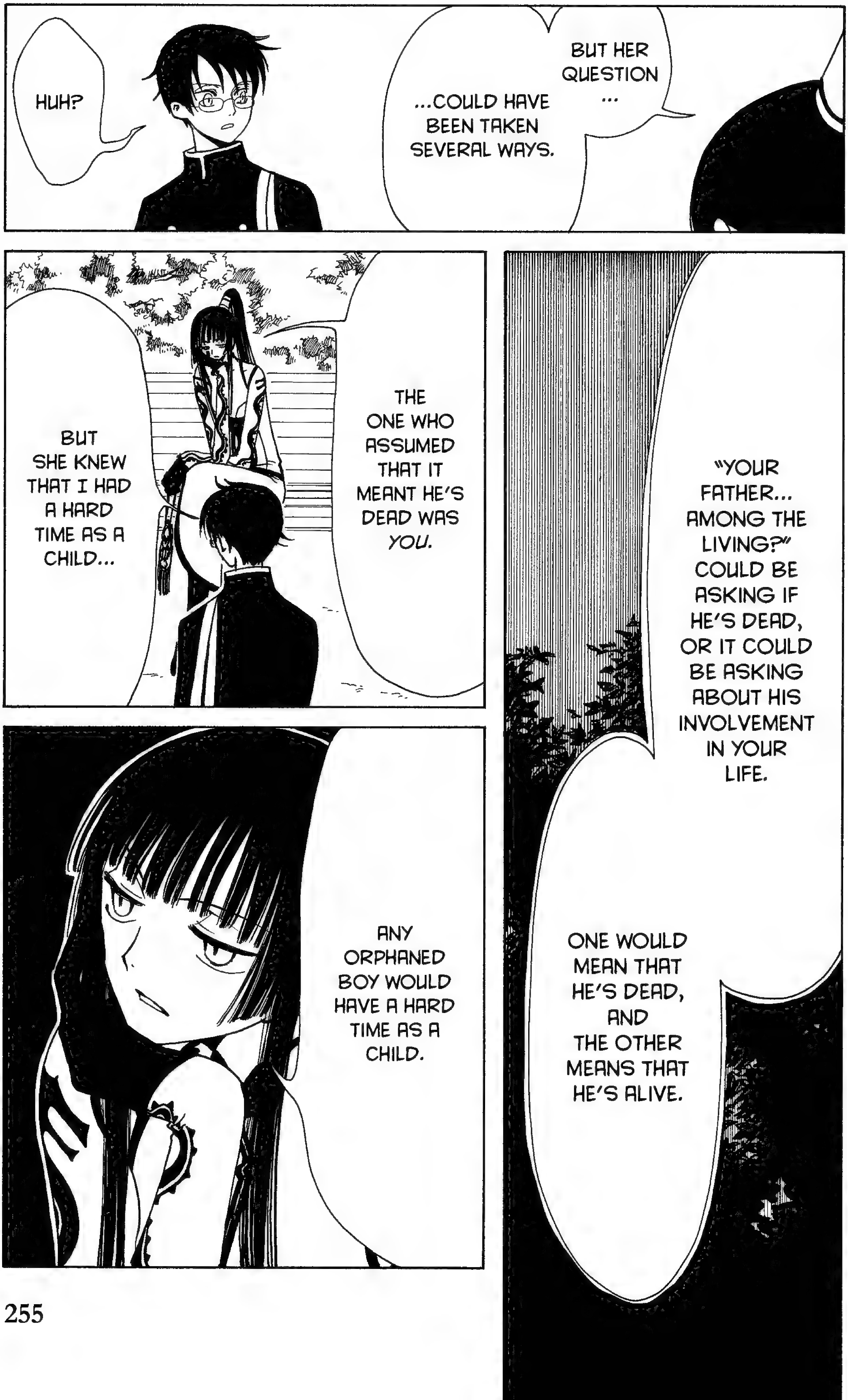

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER CONCERNS?
UM.
UHH... I...
I GUESS I HAVE...
IS IT A HARD THING TO ADMIT?
NOT SO MUCH HARD...
I'M NOT SURE WHETHER YOU'LL BELIEVE ME OR NOT.
DON'T WORRY
CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE AND YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.


WHAT?
IF YOUR OUTLOOK IS DARK, THEN EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD WILL COME OUT TERRIBLE.
BUT IF YOU ARE OPTIMISTIC AND TRY YOUR BEST, THE WHOLE WORLD CAN SEEM TO CHANGE FOR YOU.
I'M SURE IT MUST BE A TERRIBLE THING, BUT NOTHING WILL CHANGE BY JUST STANDING STILL.
YOU HAVE TO GATHER YOUR COURAGE AND FACE IT.
O— OKAY!

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?
HOW WILL THE WEATHER BE TONIGHT?
THE WEATHER REPORT SAID THAT IT WAS GOING TO CLEAR UP.
I SEE...
YÛKO...
...SAN?

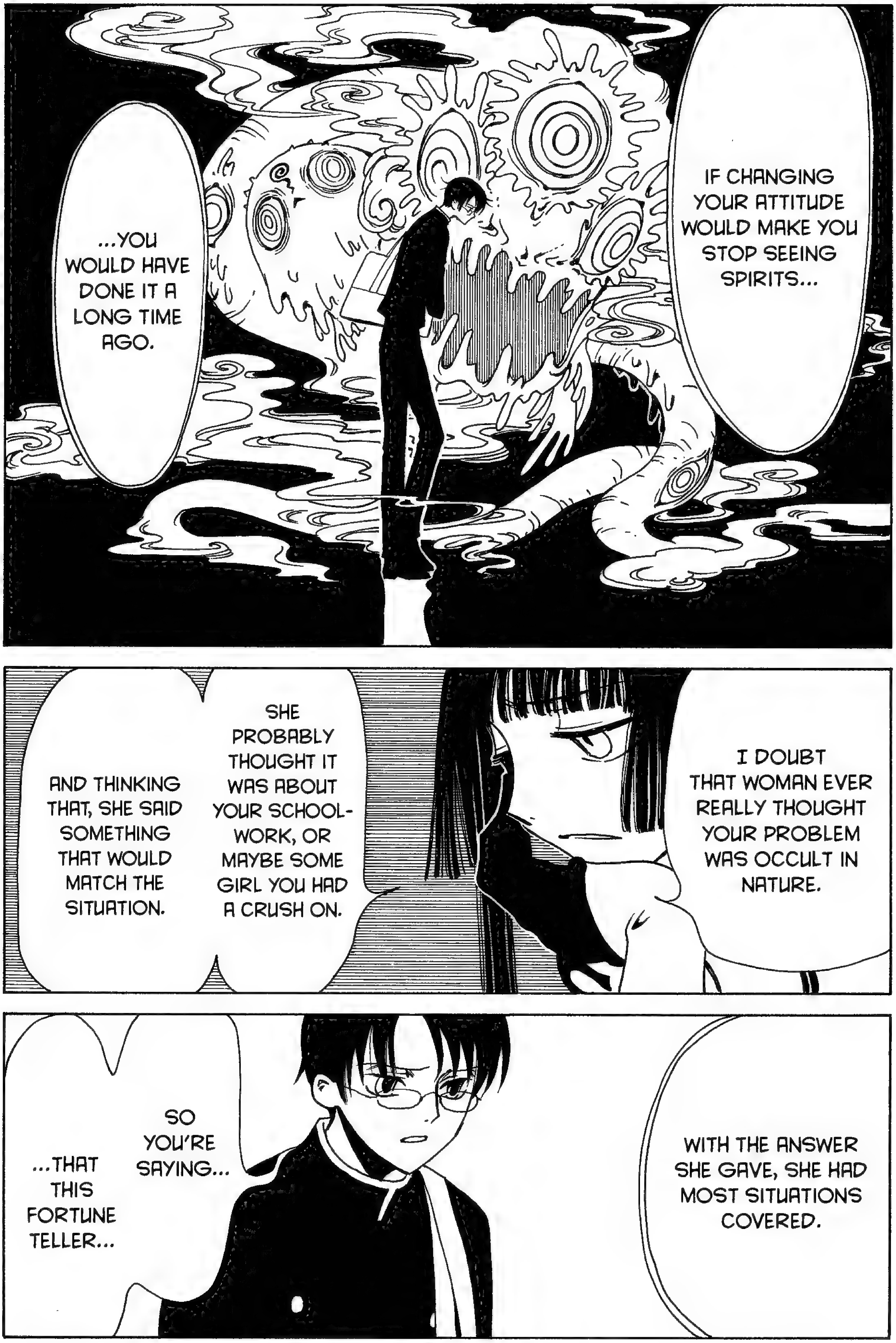

MISTRESS, THE TIME...?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXTEND THE SESSION?
SHFF
NO.
I'VE HEARD QUITE ENOUGH.

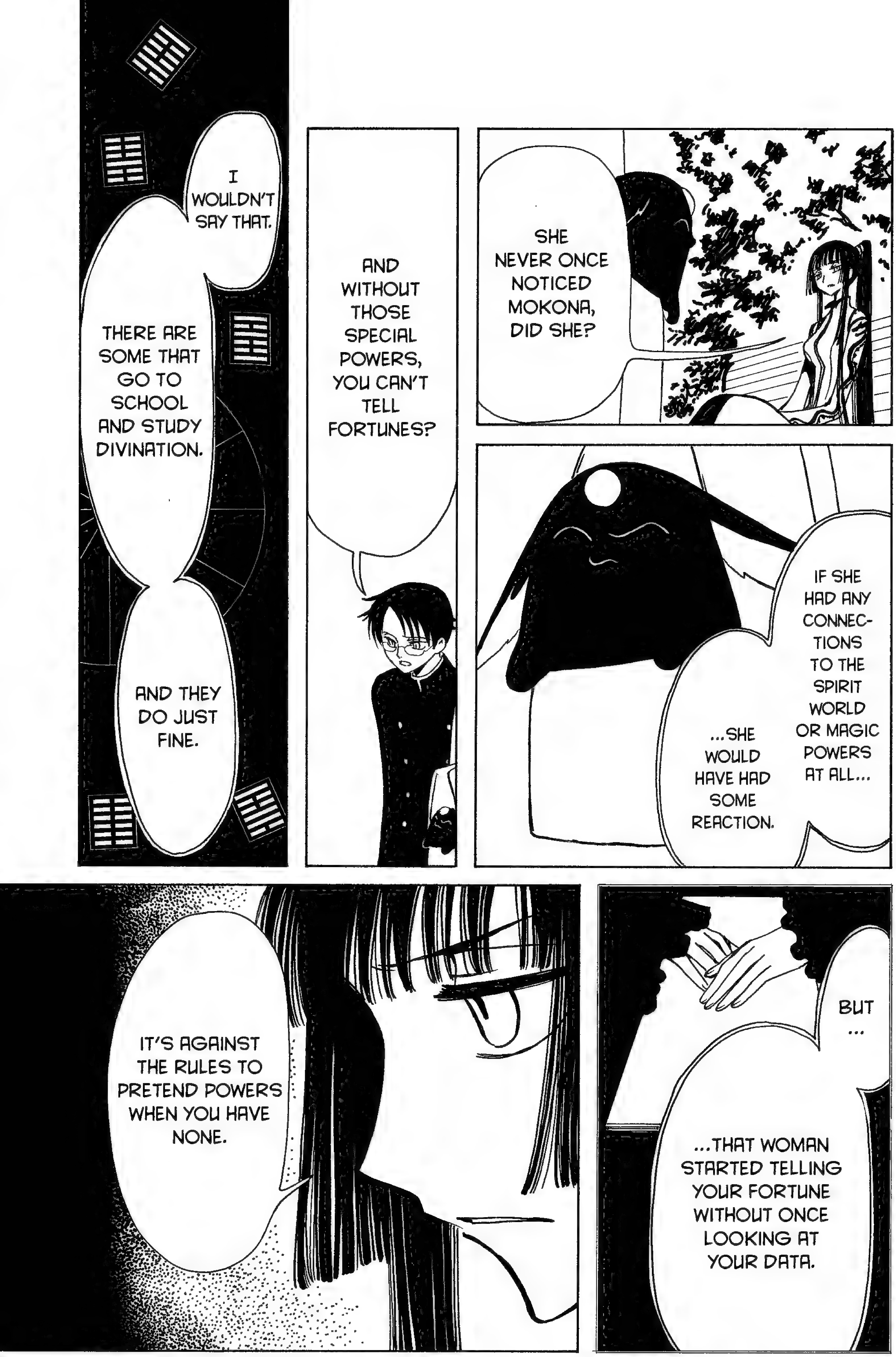

HELLO? HELLO? ♪
HOW ARE THINGS THERE?
THAT APPLE WAS REALLY GREAT!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
YOU EVEN PAID FOR THE SESSION.
YOU'RE RIGHT, THESE FORTUNE TELLERS ARE AMAZING.
WHAT'S "AMAZING" ABOUT IT?
WAIT A SEC!
SHE'D NEVER SEEN ME BEFORE...
...AND SHE AUTOMATICALLY ASKED ABOUT MY DEAD FATHER.

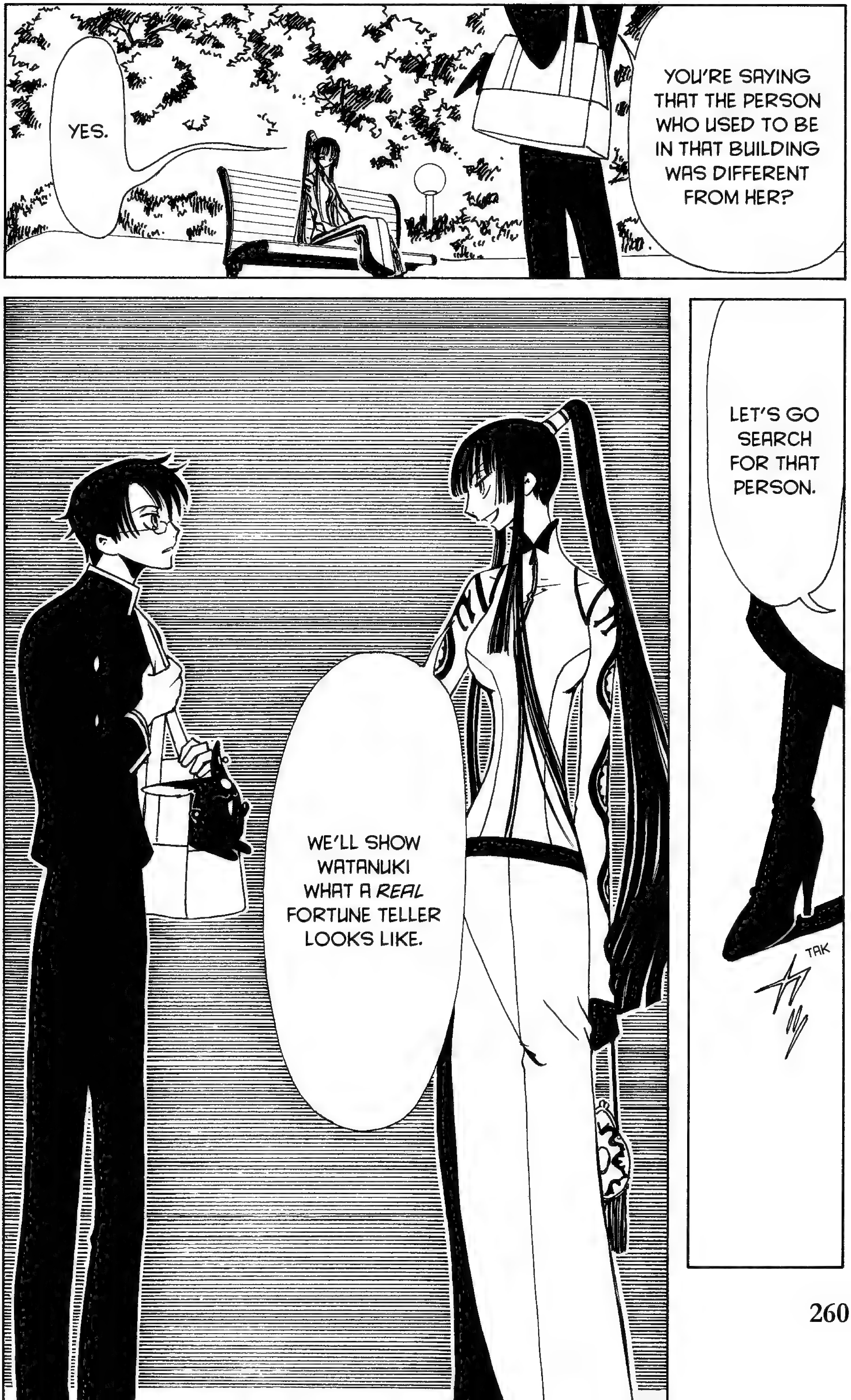

BUT HER QUESTION ...
...COULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN SEVERAL WAYS.
HUH?
"YOUR FATHER... AMONG THE LIVING?" COULD BE ASKING IF HE'S DEAD, OR IT COULD BE ASKING ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR LIFE.
ONE WOULD MEAN THAT HE'S DEAD, AND THE OTHER MEANS THAT HE'S ALIVE.
THE ONE WHO ASSUMED THAT IT MEANT HE'S DEAD WAS *YOU.*
BUT SHE KNEW THAT I HAD A HARD TIME AS A CHILD...
ANY ORPHANED BOY WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME AS A CHILD.

YOU BEING INDEPENDENT AND SELF-RELIANT, AND ABOVE ALL WORKING TOWARD THE FUTURE. THOSE ARE COMMON TRAITS FOR ANY ARIES.
ANY HOROSCOPE IN ANY BOOKSTORE WOULD SAY THE SAME.
YOU LIVE ALONE, BUT YOUR UNIFORM IS CLEAN AND WELL-CARED FOR.
YOU'D HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO KEEP IT NICE WITH HOUSEWORK.
THE THING ABOUT BEING GOOD AT HOUSEWORK...
SHE KNEW I WAS WORRYING ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP...
LOOK AT OUR CULTURE! I DOUBT THERE IS A PERSON AROUND WHO *ISN'T* WORRIED ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP.
......

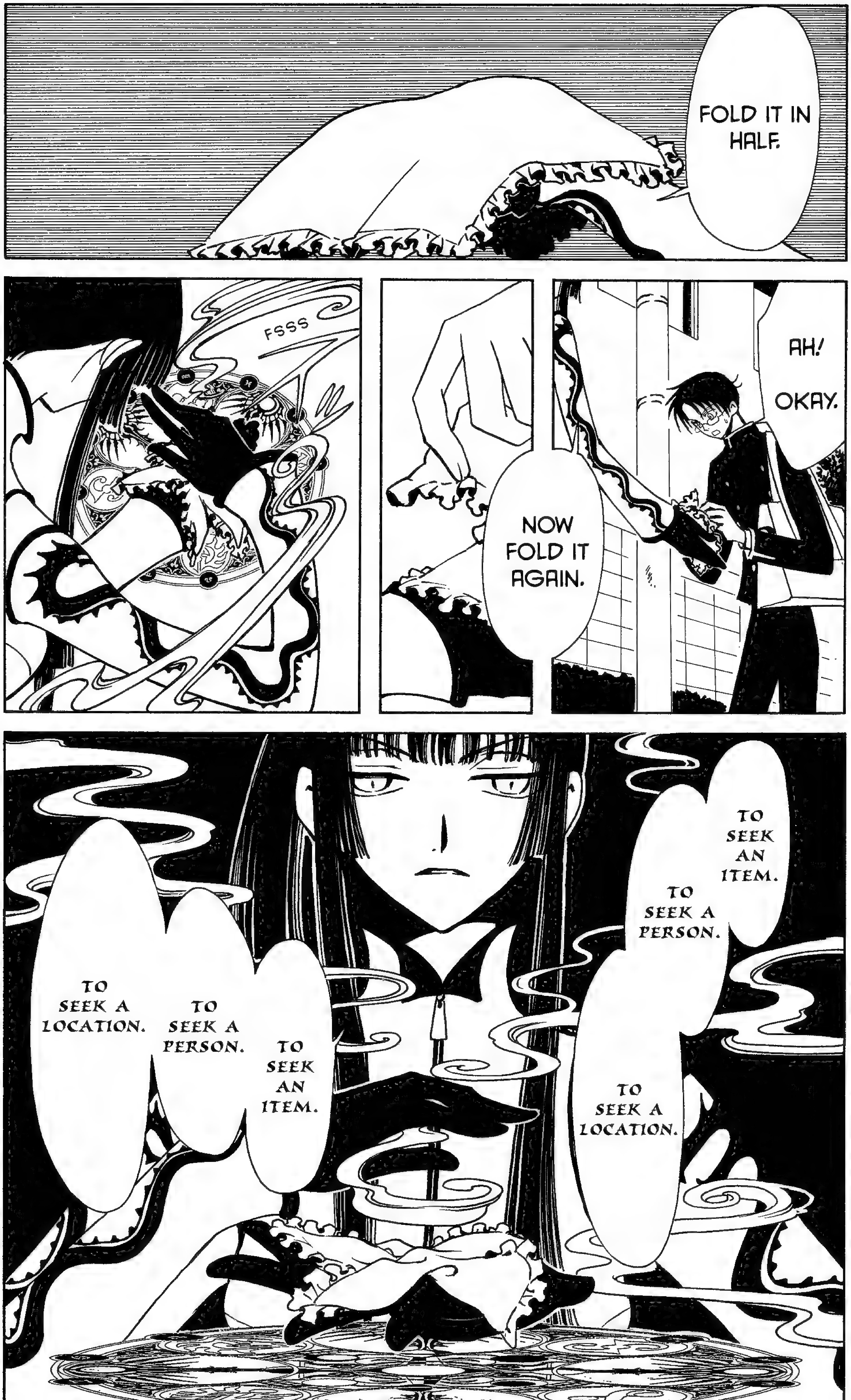
EVEN APPROACHING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SINCERITY— THAT'S A PRETTY BASIC APPROACH TO INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS.
IT'S NOTHING SPECIAL AS ADVICE GOES.
AND WHEN SHE ASKED IF YOU HAD OTHER WORRIES …
WATANUKI …
...YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU SEE SPIRITS, WEREN'T YOU?
.....
YES.
DO YOU REMEMBER THE ADVICE SHE GAVE YOU?
CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE, AND...


IF CHANGING YOUR ATTITUDE WOULD MAKE YOU STOP SEEING SPIRITS...
...YOU WOULD HAVE DONE IT A LONG TIME AGO.
I DOUBT THAT WOMAN EVER REALLY THOUGHT YOUR PROBLEM WAS OCCULT IN NATURE.
SHE PROBABLY THOUGHT IT WAS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLWORK, OR MAYBE SOME GIRL YOU HAD A CRUSH ON.
AND THINKING THAT, SHE SAID SOMETHING THAT WOULD MATCH THE SITUATION.
WITH THE ANSWER SHE GAVE, SHE HAD MOST SITUATIONS COVERED.
SO YOU'RE SAYING...
...THAT THIS FORTUNE TELLER...

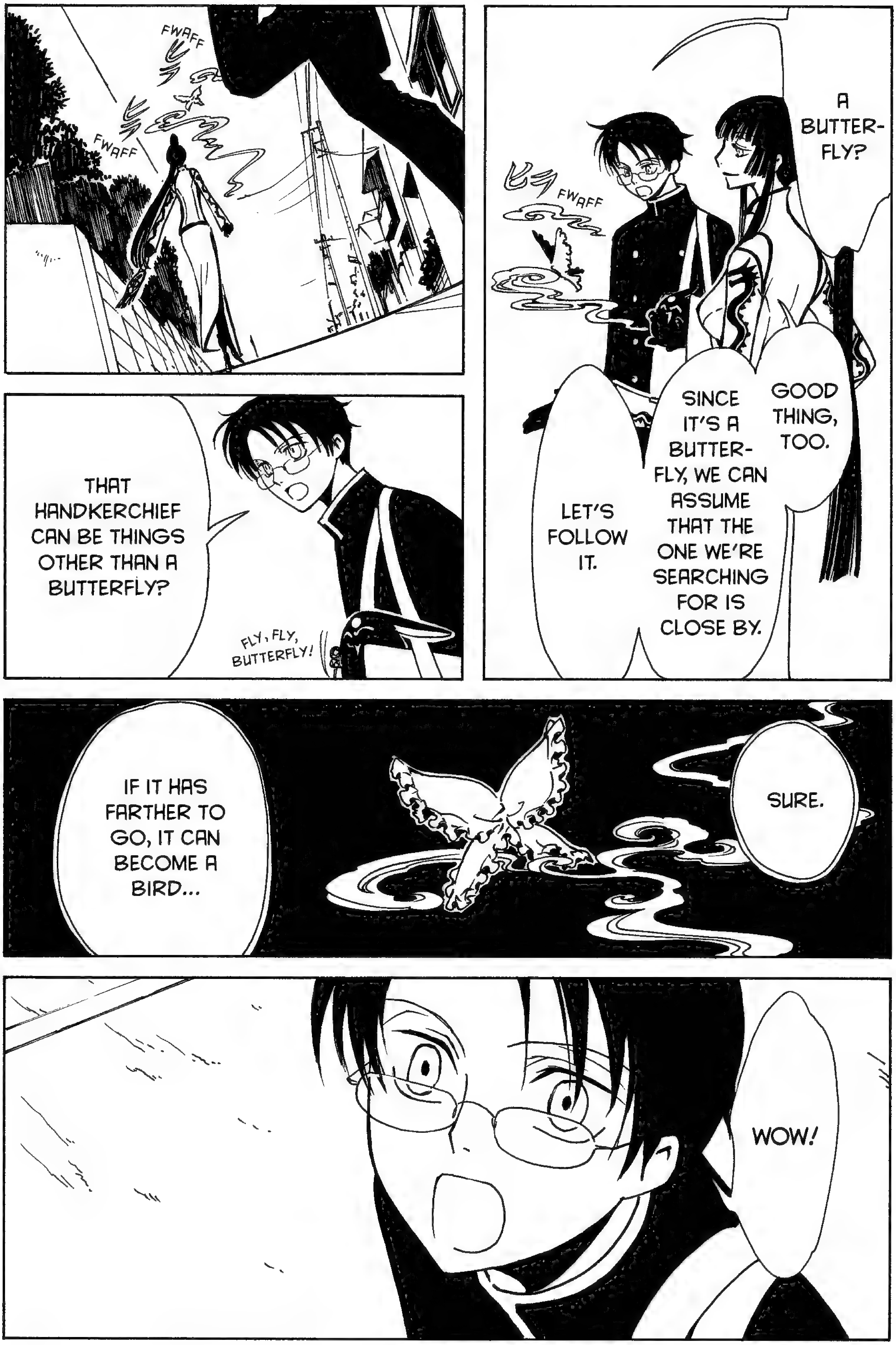

SHE NEVER ONCE NOTICED MOKONA, DID SHE?
IF SHE HAD ANY CONNECTIONS TO THE SPIRIT WORLD OR MAGIC POWERS AT ALL...
...SHE WOULD HAVE HAD SOME REACTION.
AND WITHOUT THOSE SPECIAL POWERS, YOU CAN'T TELL FORTUNES?
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT.
THERE ARE SOME THAT GO TO SCHOOL AND STUDY DIVINATION.
AND THEY DO JUST FINE.
BUT ...
...THAT WOMAN STARTED TELLING YOUR FORTUNE WITHOUT ONCE LOOKING AT YOUR DATA.
IT'S AGAINST THE RULES TO PRETEND POWERS WHEN YOU HAVE NONE.

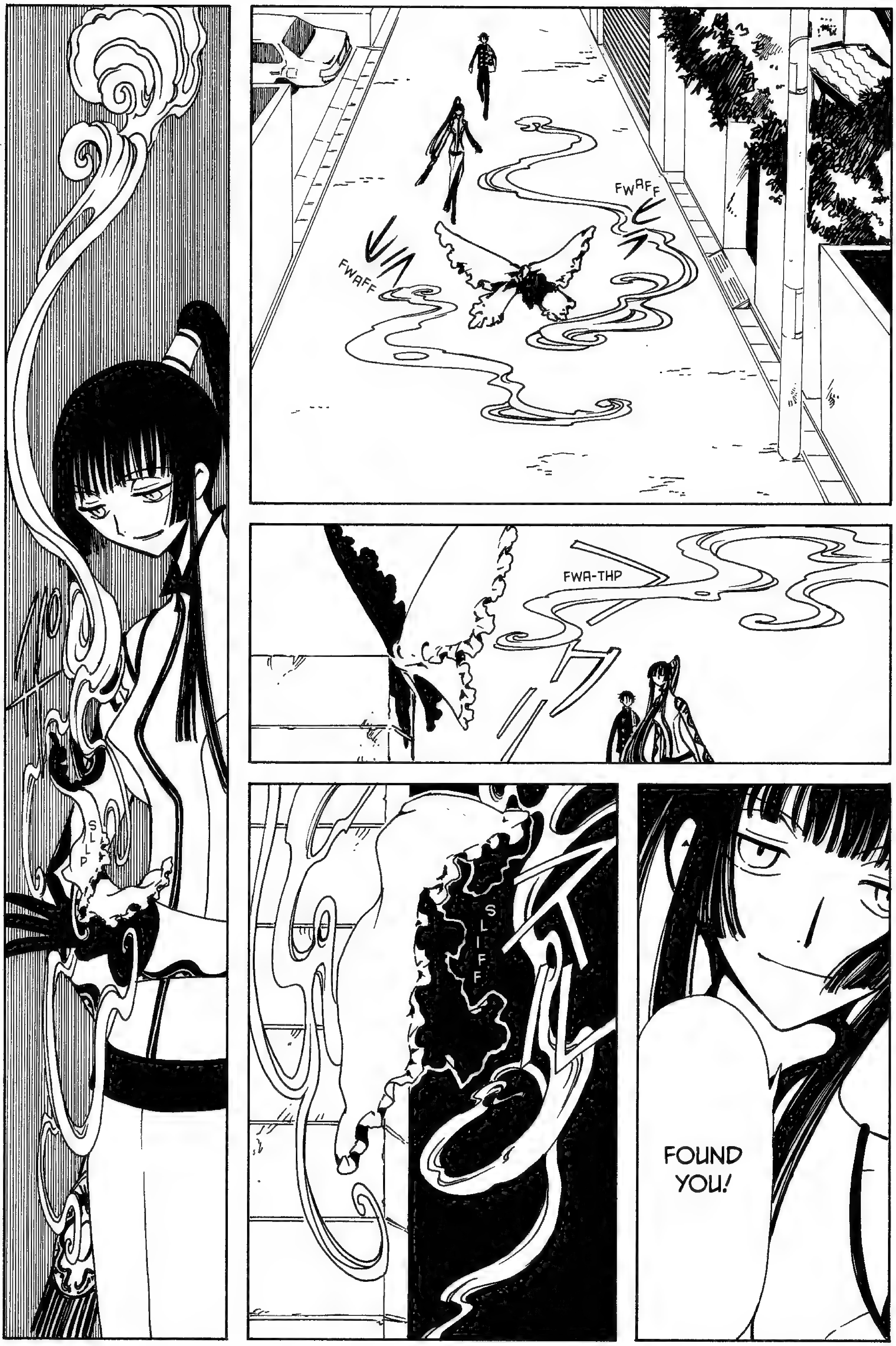

YOU'RE SAYING THAT THE PERSON WHO USED TO BE IN THAT BUILDING WAS DIFFERENT FROM HER?
YES.
LET'S GO SEARCH FOR THAT PERSON.
TAK
WE'LL SHOW WATANUKI WHAT A *REAL* FORTUNE TELLER LOOKS LIKE.

xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

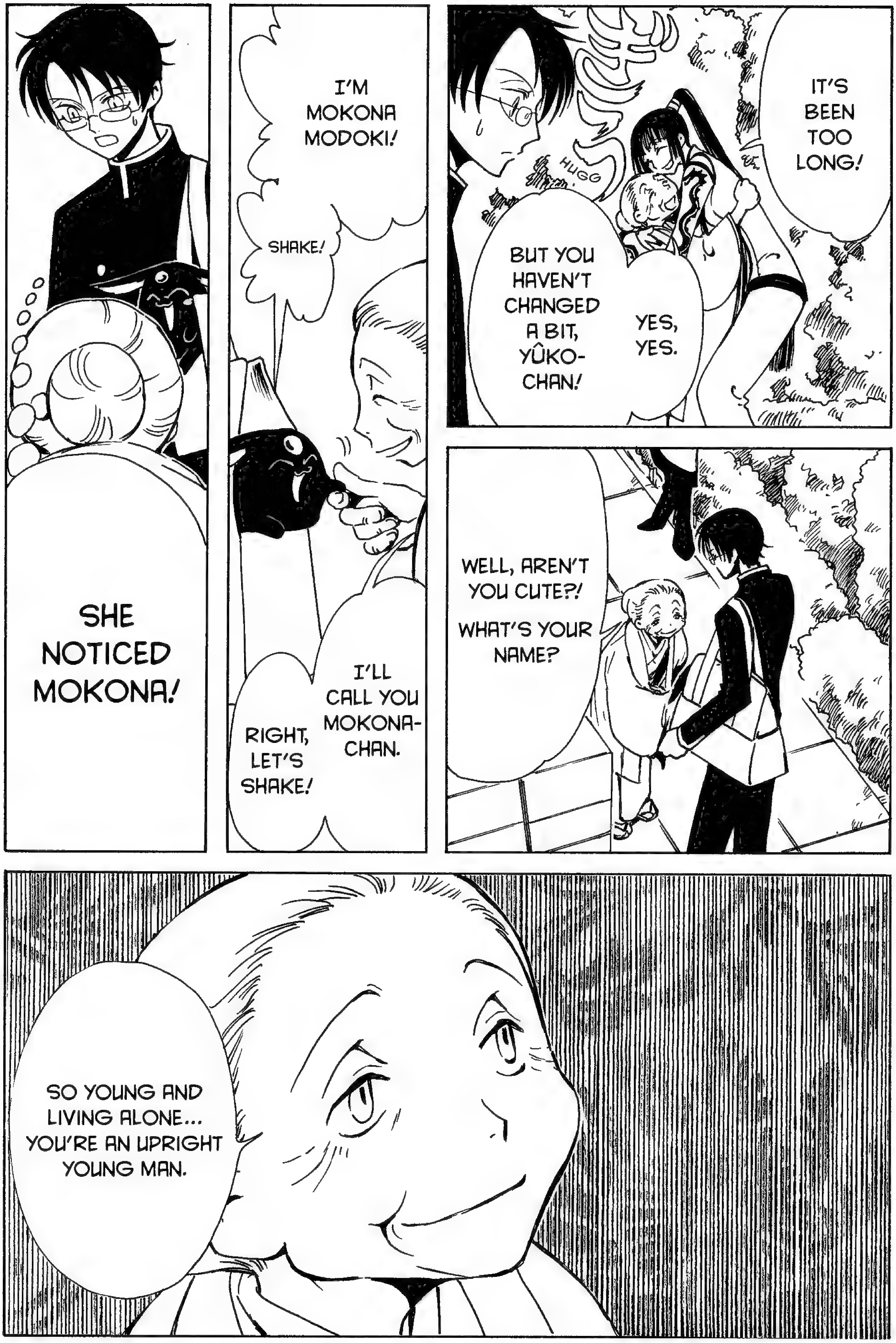

FOLD IT IN HALF.
AH! OKAY.
NOW FOLD IT AGAIN.
FSSS
TO SEEK AN ITEM.
TO SEEK A PERSON.
TO SEEK A LOCATION.
TO SEEK AN ITEM.
TO SEEK A PERSON.
TO SEEK A LOCATION.

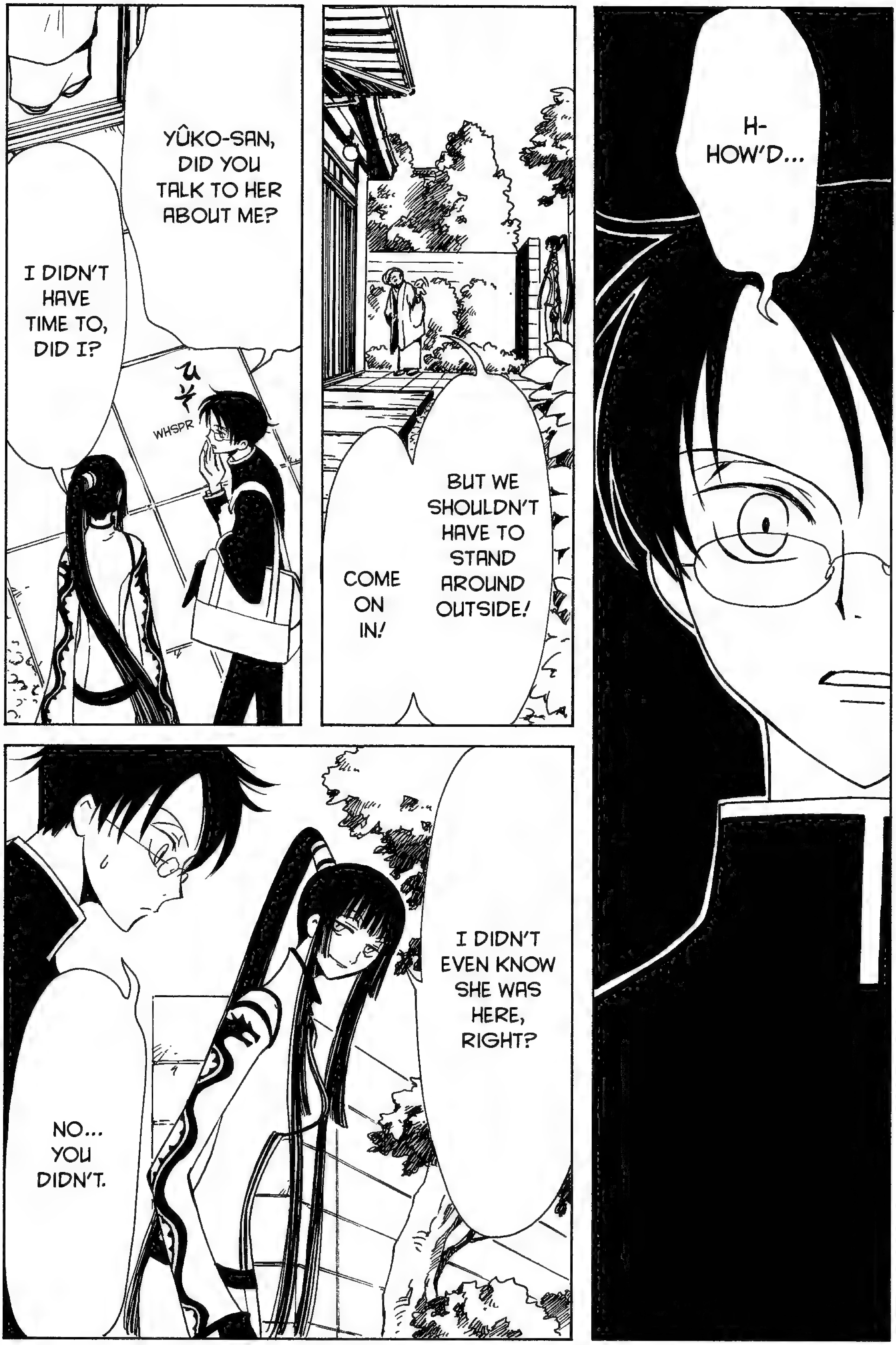
GUIDE MY SEARCH ...
...THAT WHICH FLIES...
...TO THE PERSON I SEEK.
FWAFF

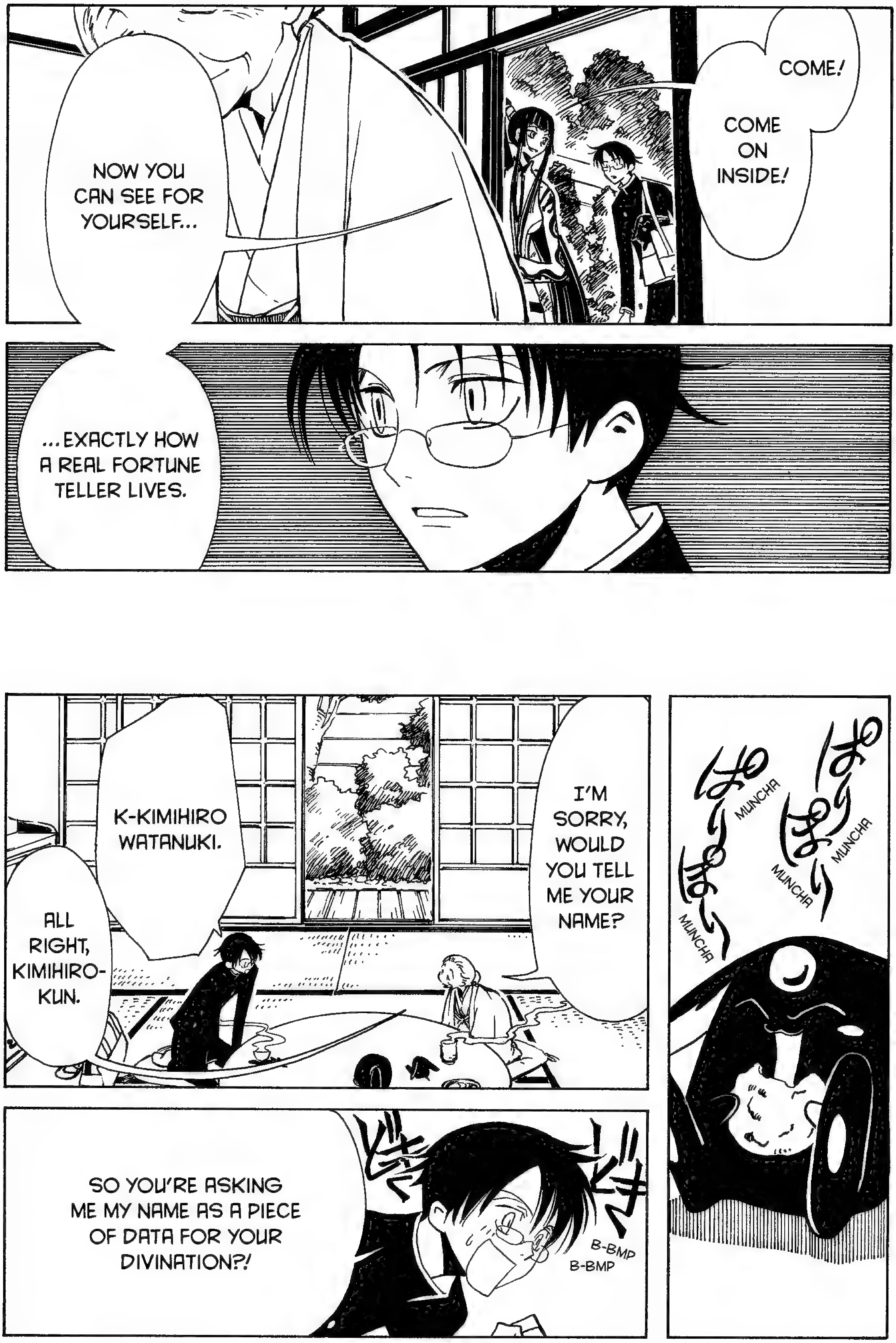

A BUTTER-FLY?
FWAFF
GOOD THING, TOO.
SINCE IT'S A BUTTER-FLY, WE CAN ASSUME THAT THE ONE WE'RE SEARCHING FOR IS CLOSE BY.
LET'S FOLLOW IT.
FWAFF
FWAFF
THAT HANDKERCHIEF CAN BE THINGS OTHER THAN A BUTTERFLY?
FLY, FLY, BUTTERFLY!
SURE.
IF IT HAS FARTHER TO GO, IT CAN BECOME A BIRD...
WOW!

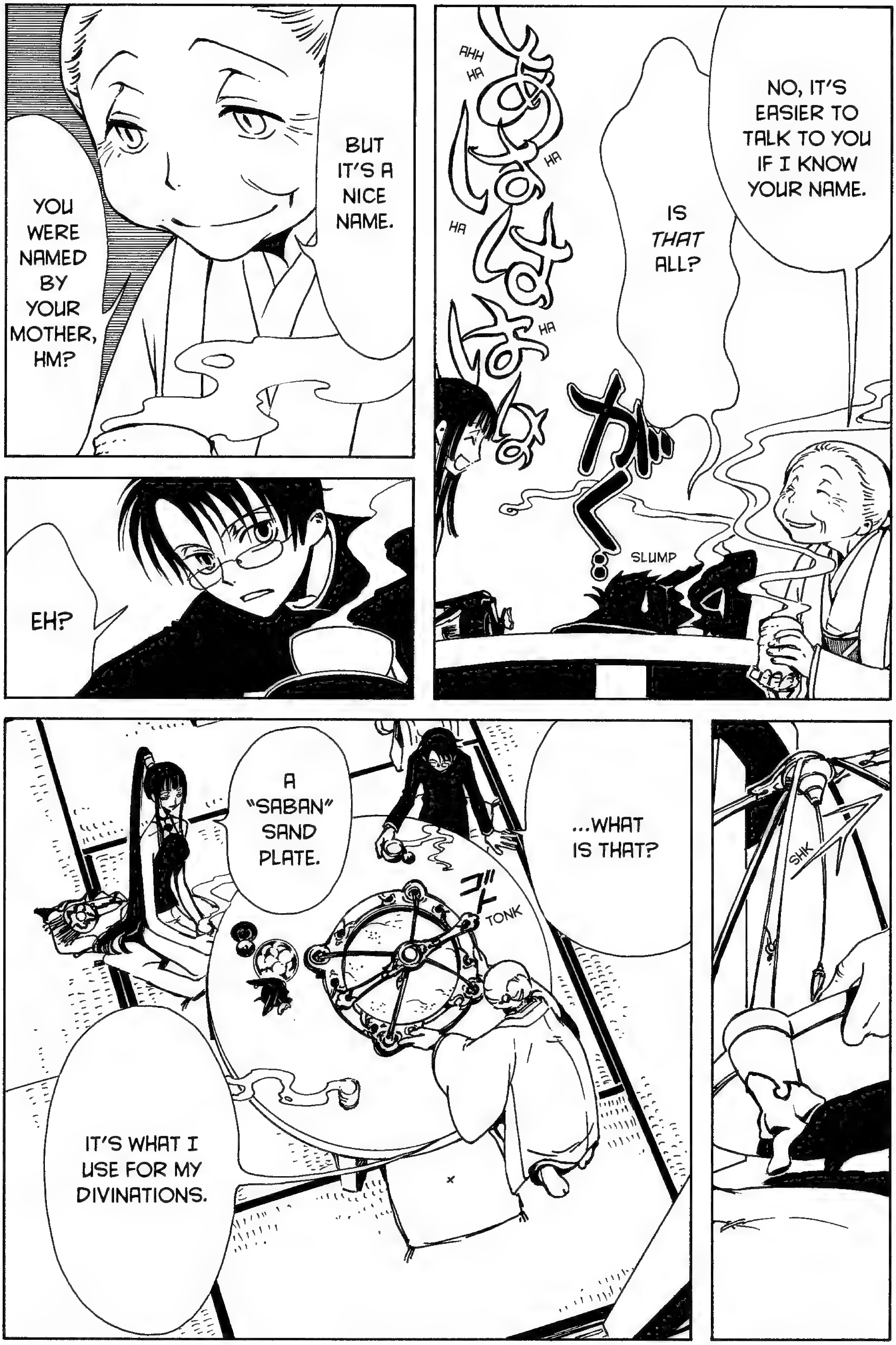

FWAFF
FWAFF
FWA-THP
FOUND YOU!
SLIFF
SLLP

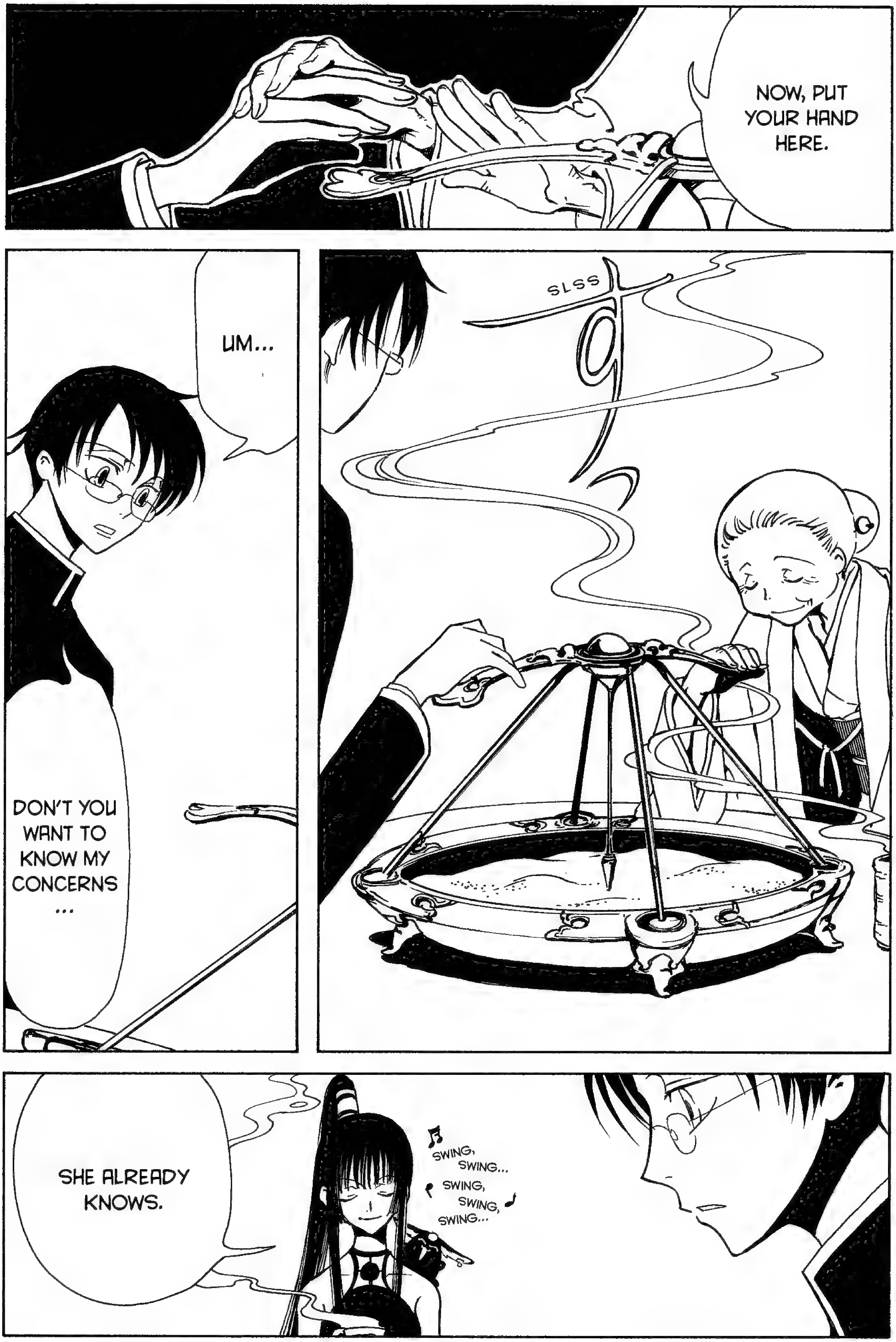
EH?!
YOU MEAN *HERE?!*
IT *HAS* TO BE HERE.
BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OR ANYTHING!
GLANCE
AND IT LOOKS LIKE ANY NORMAL HOUSE!
WELCOME, YÛKO-CHAN.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

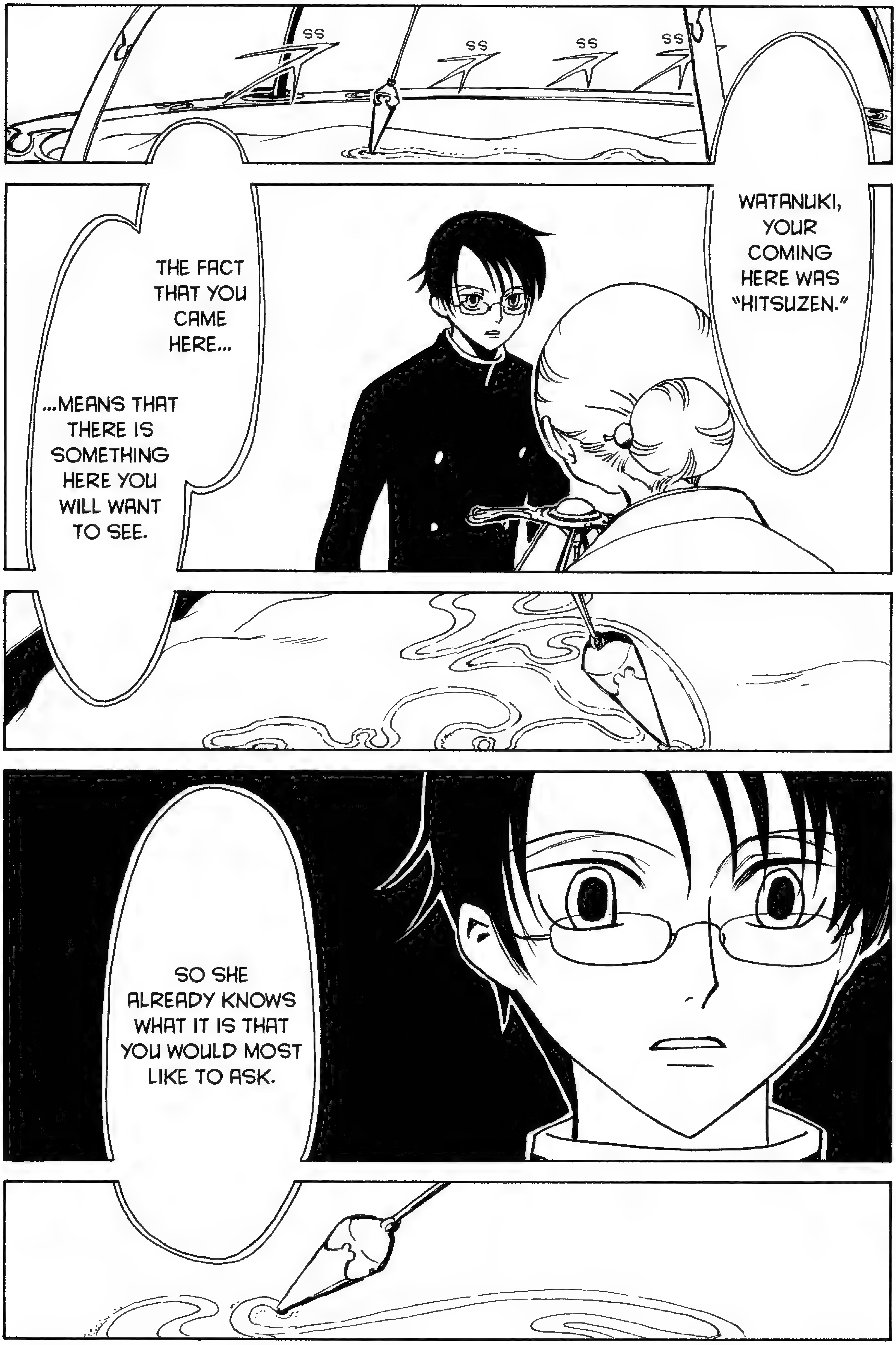

IT'S BEEN TOO LONG!
HUGG
BUT YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, YÛKO-CHAN!
YES, YES.
WELL, AREN'T YOU CUTE?! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
I'M MOKONA MODOKI!
SHAKE!
I'LL CALL YOU MOKONA-CHAN.
RIGHT, LET'S SHAKE!
SHE NOTICED MOKONA!
SO YOUNG AND LIVING ALONE... YOU'RE AN UPRIGHT YOUNG MAN.

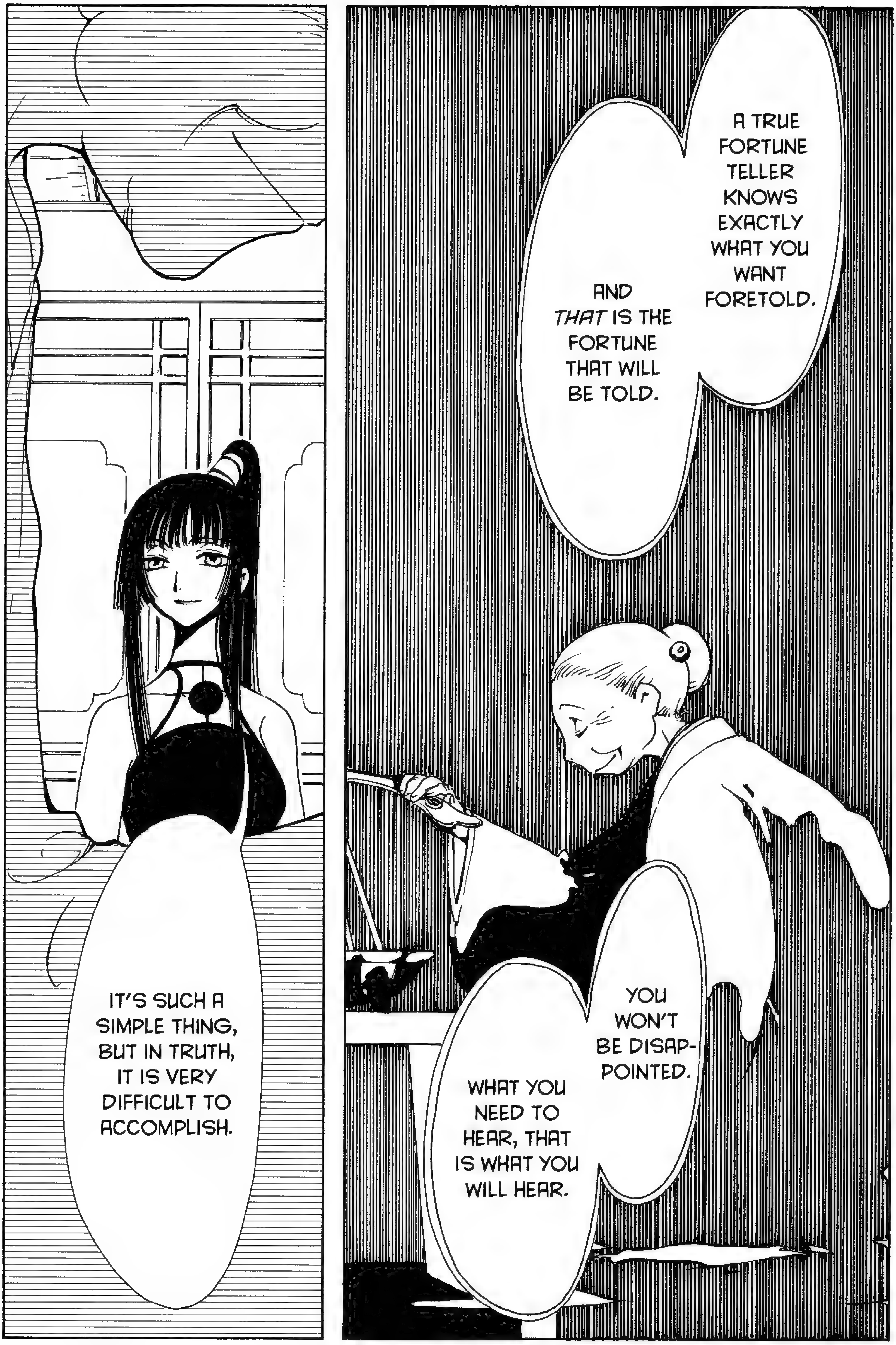

H- HOW'D...
BUT WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO STAND AROUND OUTSIDE!
COME ON IN!
YÛKO-SAN, DID YOU TALK TO HER ABOUT ME?
ひそ
WHSPR
I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO, DID I?
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW SHE WAS HERE, RIGHT?
NO... YOU DIDN'T.

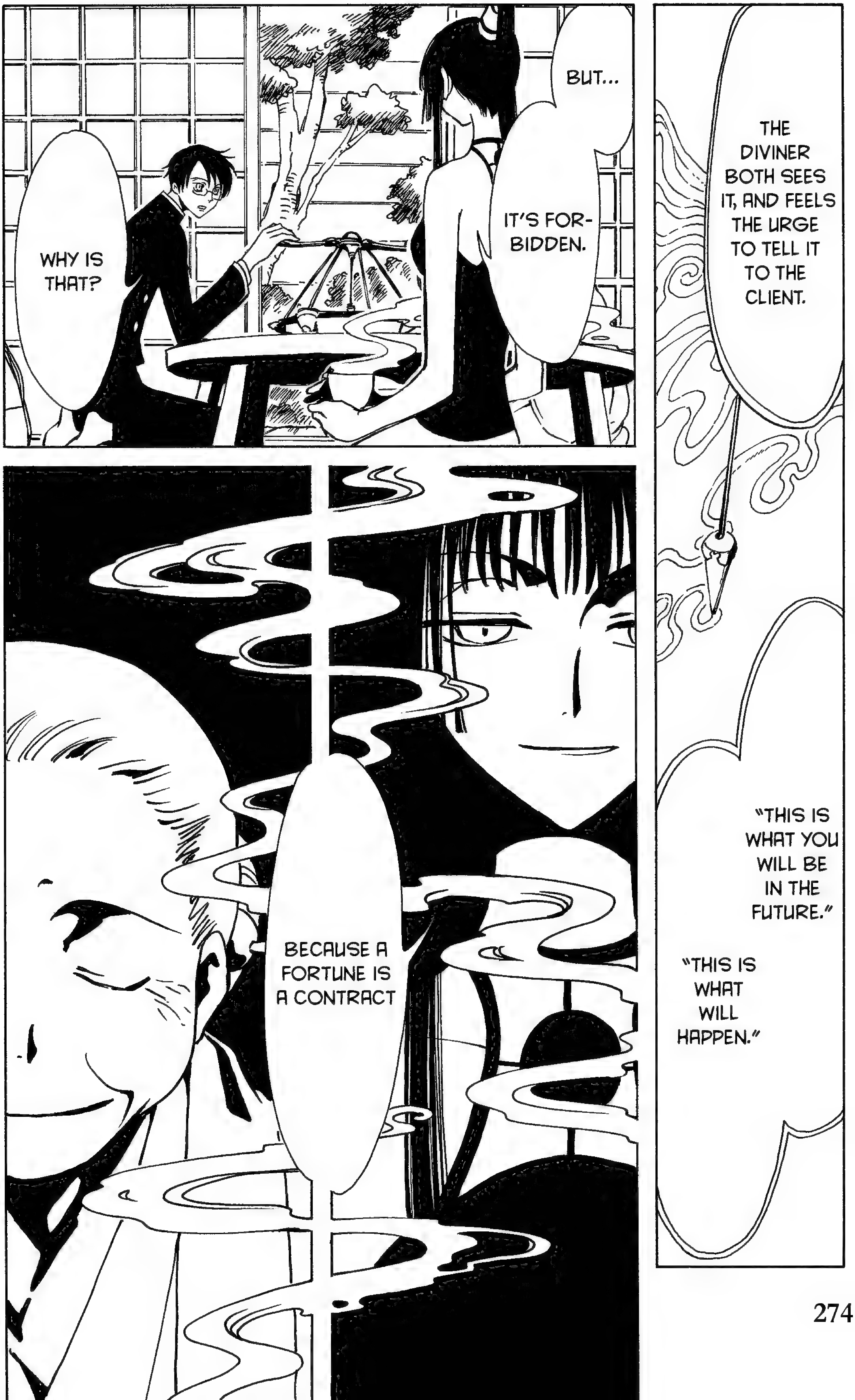

COME!
COME ON INSIDE!
NOW YOU CAN SEE FOR YOURSELF...
...EXACTLY HOW A REAL FORTUNE TELLER LIVES.
ぽりぽり MUNCHA MUNCHA
ぽりぽり MUNCHA MUNCHA
I'M SORRY, WOULD YOU TELL ME YOUR NAME?
K-KIMIHIRO WATANUKI.
ALL RIGHT, KIMIHIRO-KUN.
どきどき B-BMP B-BMP
SO YOU'RE ASKING ME MY NAME AS A PIECE OF DATA FOR YOUR DIVINATION?!

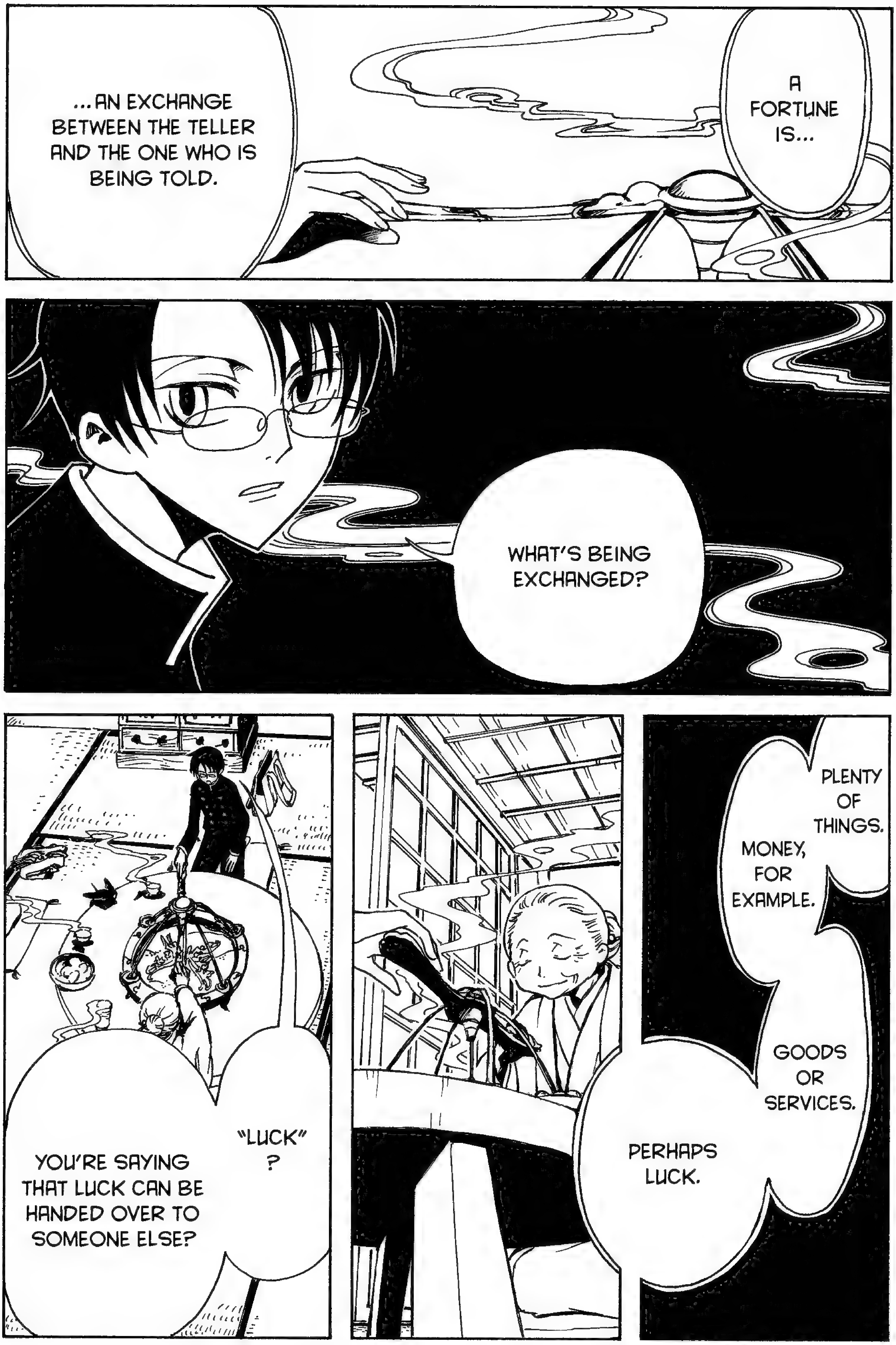

NO, IT'S EASIER TO TALK TO YOU IF I KNOW YOUR NAME.
IS *THAT* ALL?
AHH HA HA HA HA HA
あははは
がく
SLUMP
BUT IT'S A NICE NAME.
YOU WERE NAMED BY YOUR MOTHER, HM?
EH?
SHK
...WHAT IS THAT?
A "SABAN" SAND PLATE.
ゴ
TONK
IT'S WHAT I USE FOR MY DIVINATIONS.

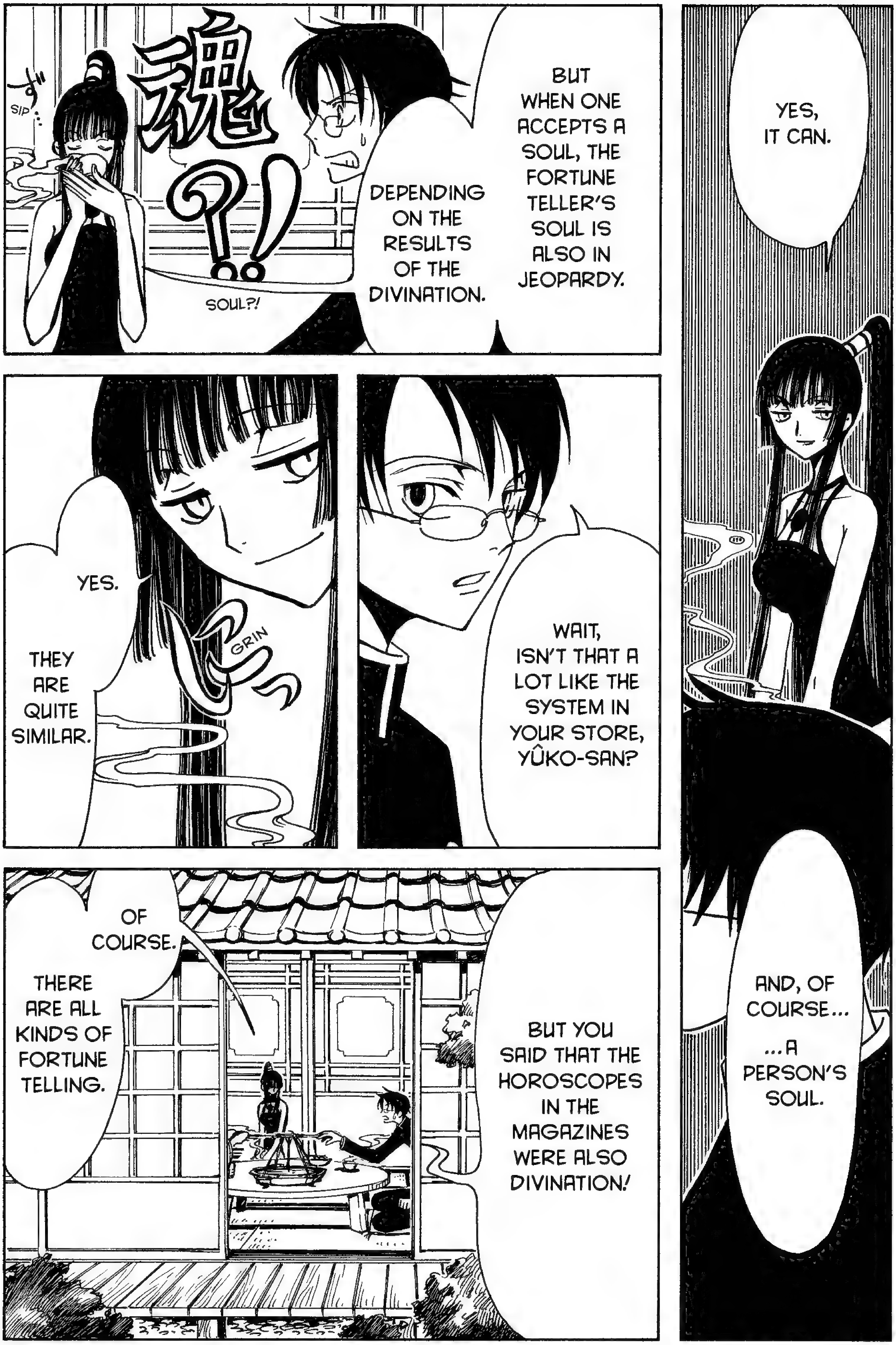

NOW, PUT YOUR HAND HERE.
SLSS
UM...
DON'T YOU WANT TO KNOW MY CONCERNS...
SWING, SWING... SWING, SWING, SWING...
SHE ALREADY KNOWS.

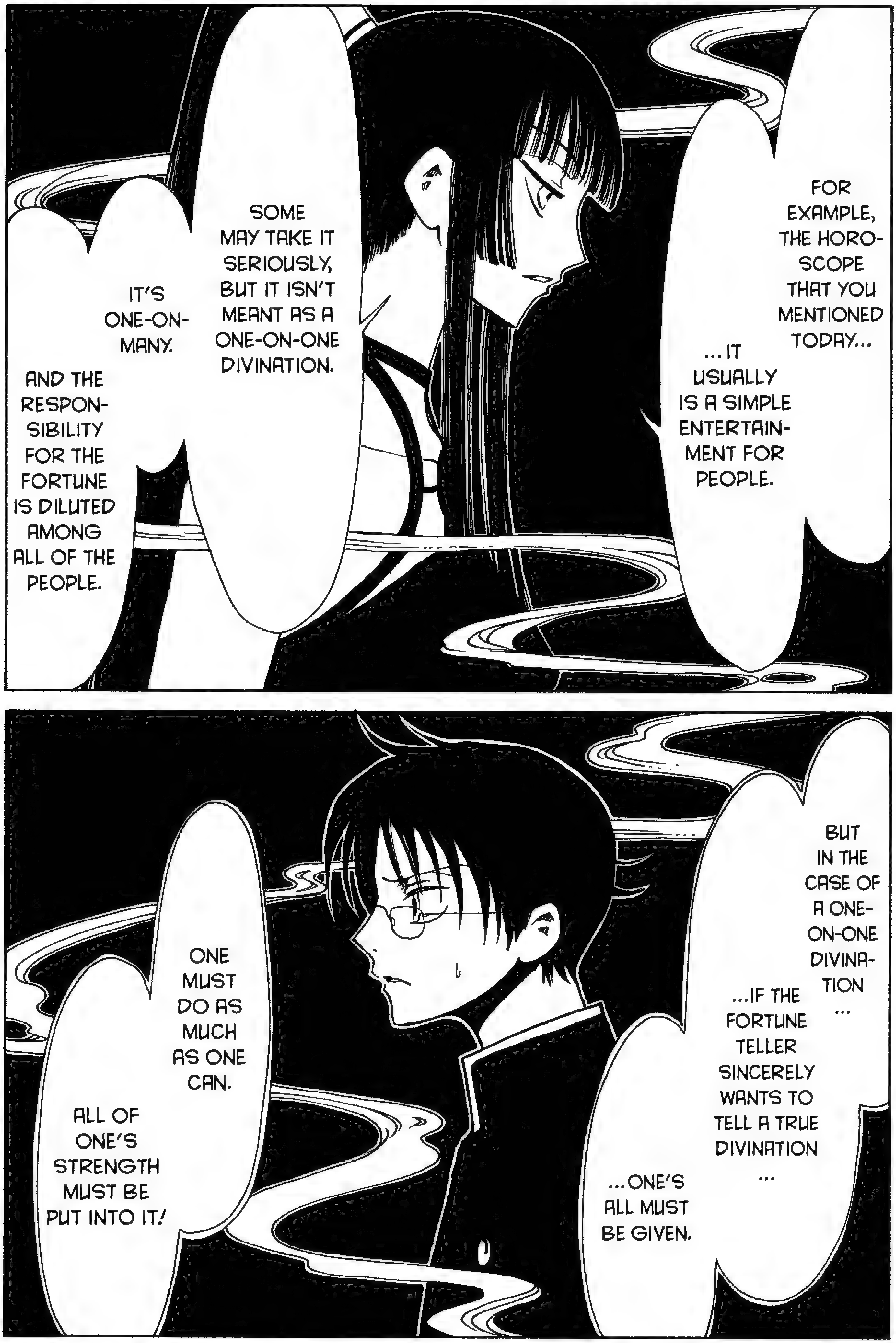

SS
SS
SS
SS
WATANUKI, YOUR COMING HERE WAS "HITSUZEN."
THE FACT THAT YOU CAME HERE...
...MEANS THAT THERE IS SOMETHING HERE YOU WILL WANT TO SEE.
SO SHE ALREADY KNOWS WHAT IT IS THAT YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO ASK.


A TRUE FORTUNE TELLER KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT FORETOLD.
AND *THAT* IS THE FORTUNE THAT WILL BE TOLD.
YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.
WHAT YOU NEED TO HEAR, THAT IS WHAT YOU WILL HEAR.
IT'S SUCH A SIMPLE THING, BUT IN TRUTH, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO ACCOMPLISH.

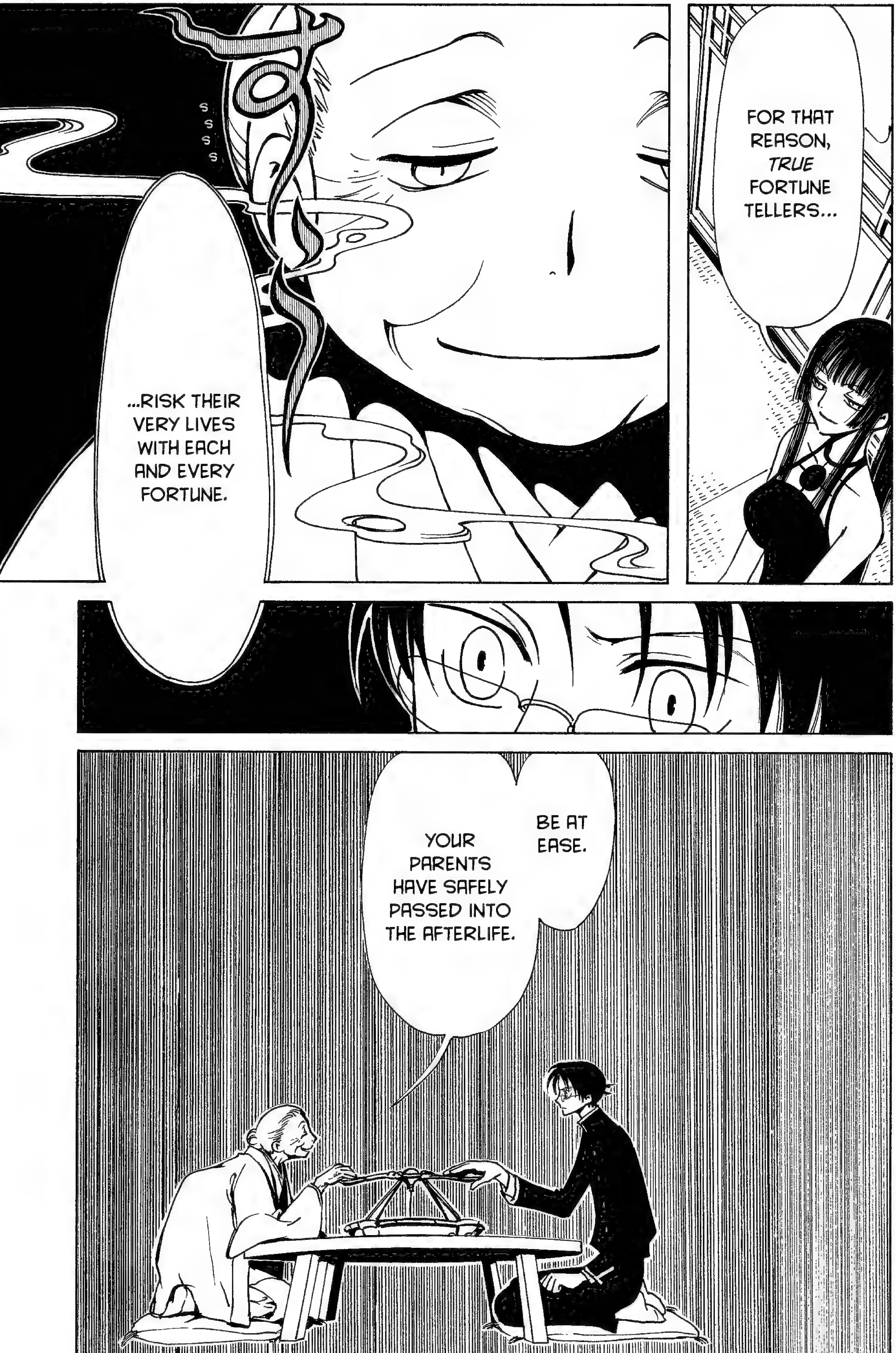

WHY IS THAT?
IT'S FORBIDDEN.
BUT...
THE DIVINER BOTH SEES IT, AND FEELS THE URGE TO TELL IT TO THE CLIENT.
"THIS IS WHAT YOU WILL BE IN THE FUTURE."
"THIS IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN."
BECAUSE A FORTUNE IS A CONTRACT

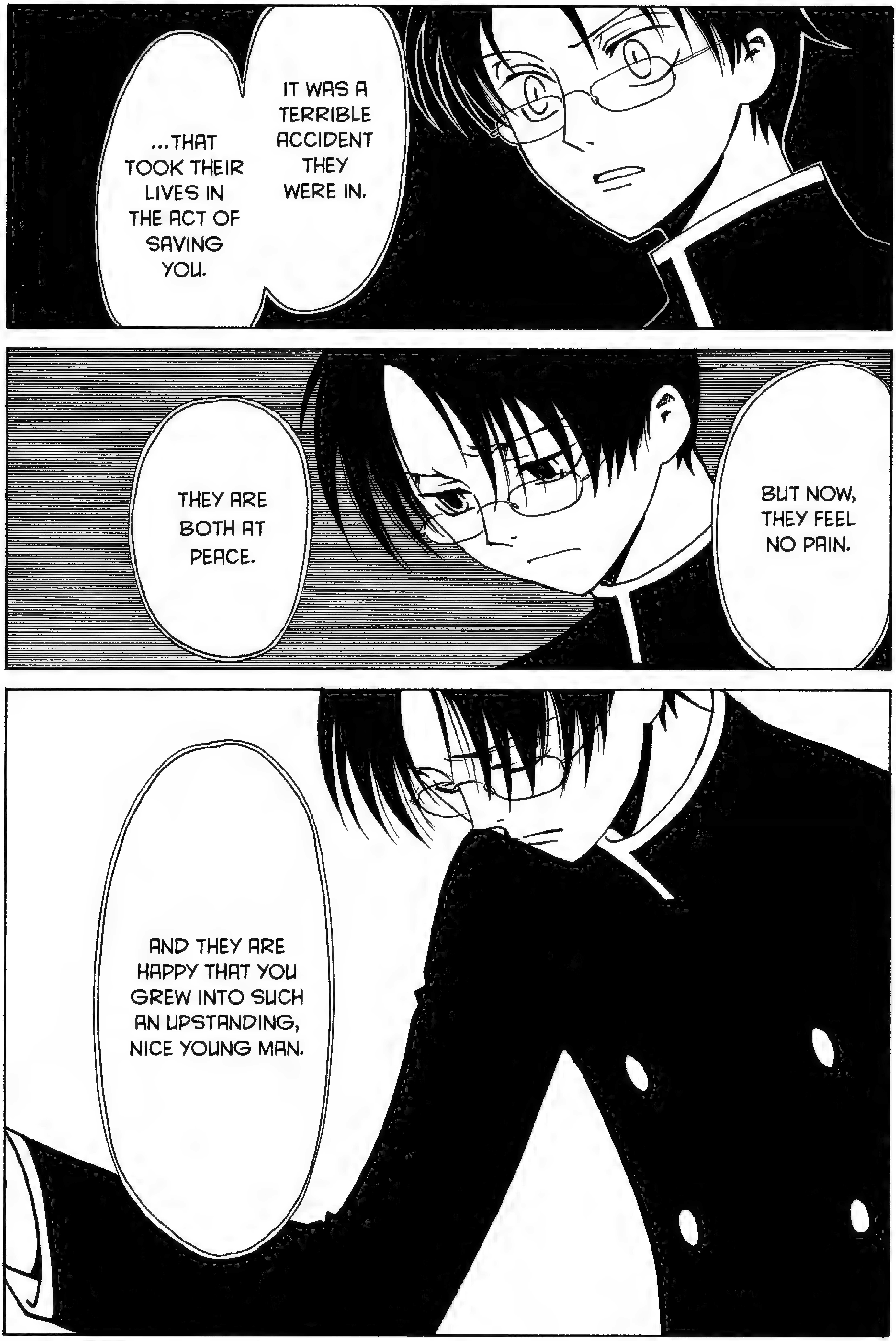

A FORTUNE IS...
...AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE TELLER AND THE ONE WHO IS BEING TOLD.
WHAT'S BEING EXCHANGED?
PLENTY OF THINGS.
MONEY, FOR EXAMPLE.
GOODS OR SERVICES.
PERHAPS LUCK.
"LUCK"?
YOU'RE SAYING THAT LUCK CAN BE HANDED OVER TO SOMEONE ELSE?

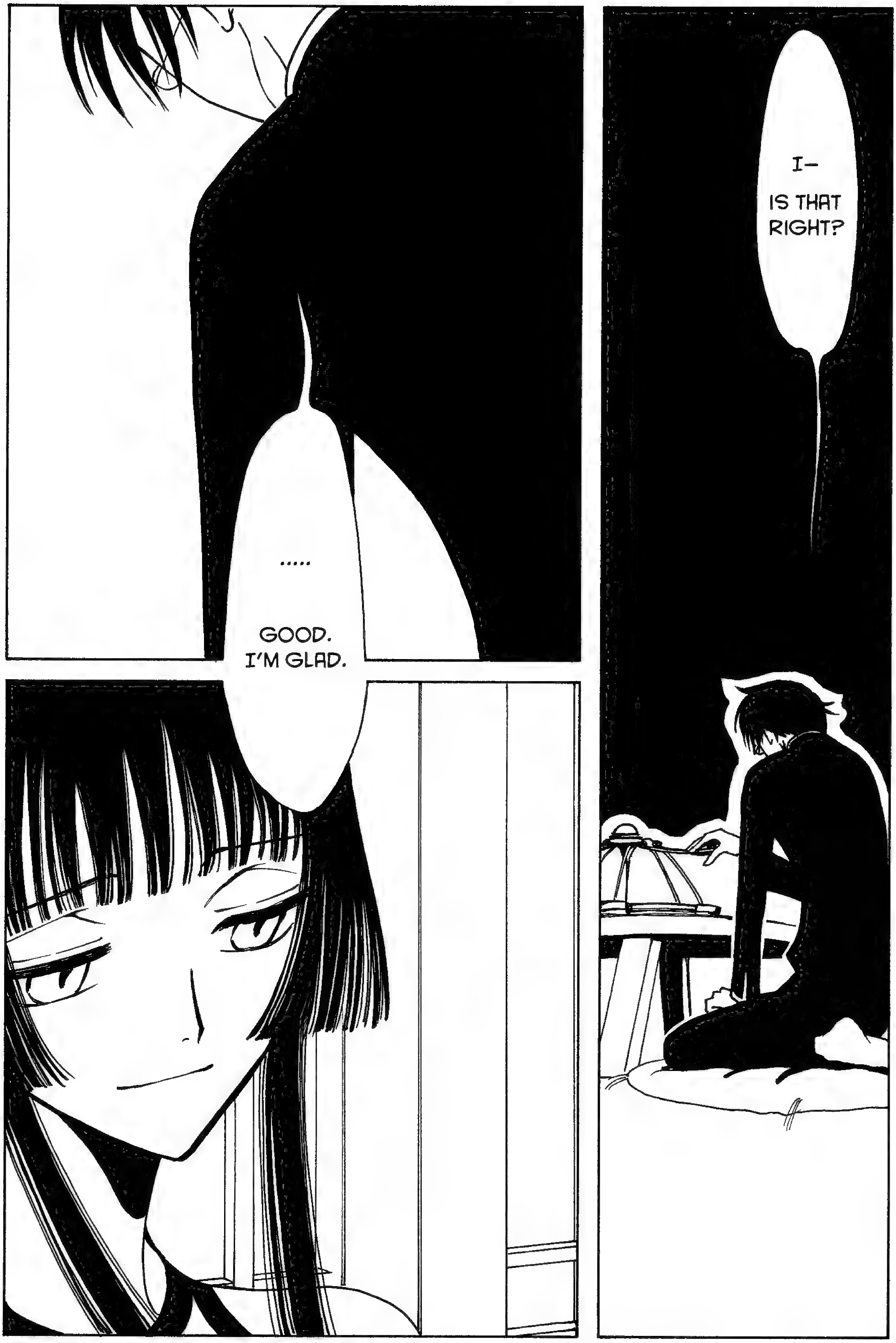

YES, IT CAN.
AND, OF COURSE...
...A PERSON'S SOUL.
魂?!
SOUL?!
ず
SIP
BUT WHEN ONE ACCEPTS A SOUL, THE FORTUNE TELLER'S SOUL IS ALSO IN JEOPARDY.
DEPENDING ON THE RESULTS OF THE DIVINATION.
WAIT, ISN'T THAT A LOT LIKE THE SYSTEM IN YOUR STORE, YÛKO-SAN?
YES.
THEY ARE QUITE SIMILAR.
GRIN
BUT YOU SAID THAT THE HOROSCOPES IN THE MAGAZINES WERE ALSO DIVINATION!
OF COURSE.
THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF FORTUNE TELLING.

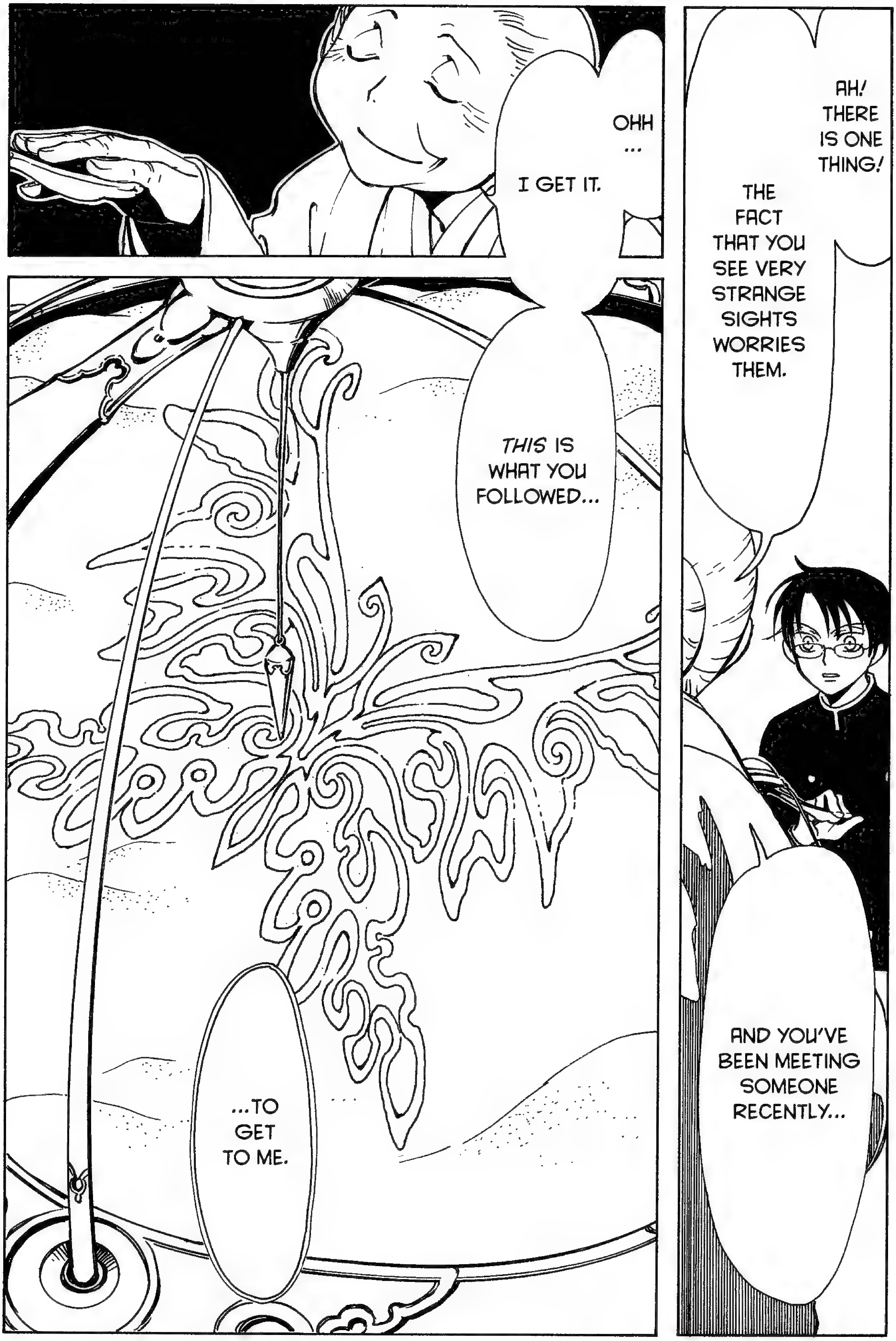

FOR EXAMPLE, THE HOROSCOPE THAT YOU MENTIONED TODAY...
...IT USUALLY IS A SIMPLE ENTERTAINMENT FOR PEOPLE.
SOME MAY TAKE IT SERIOUSLY, BUT IT ISN'T MEANT AS A ONE-ON-ONE DIVINATION.
IT'S ONE-ON-MANY.
AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FORTUNE IS DILUTED AMONG ALL OF THE PEOPLE.
BUT IN THE CASE OF A ONE-ON-ONE DIVINATION...
...IF THE FORTUNE TELLER SINCERELY WANTS TO TELL A TRUE DIVINATION...
...ONE'S ALL MUST BE GIVEN.
ONE MUST DO AS MUCH AS ONE CAN.
ALL OF ONE'S STRENGTH MUST BE PUT INTO IT!

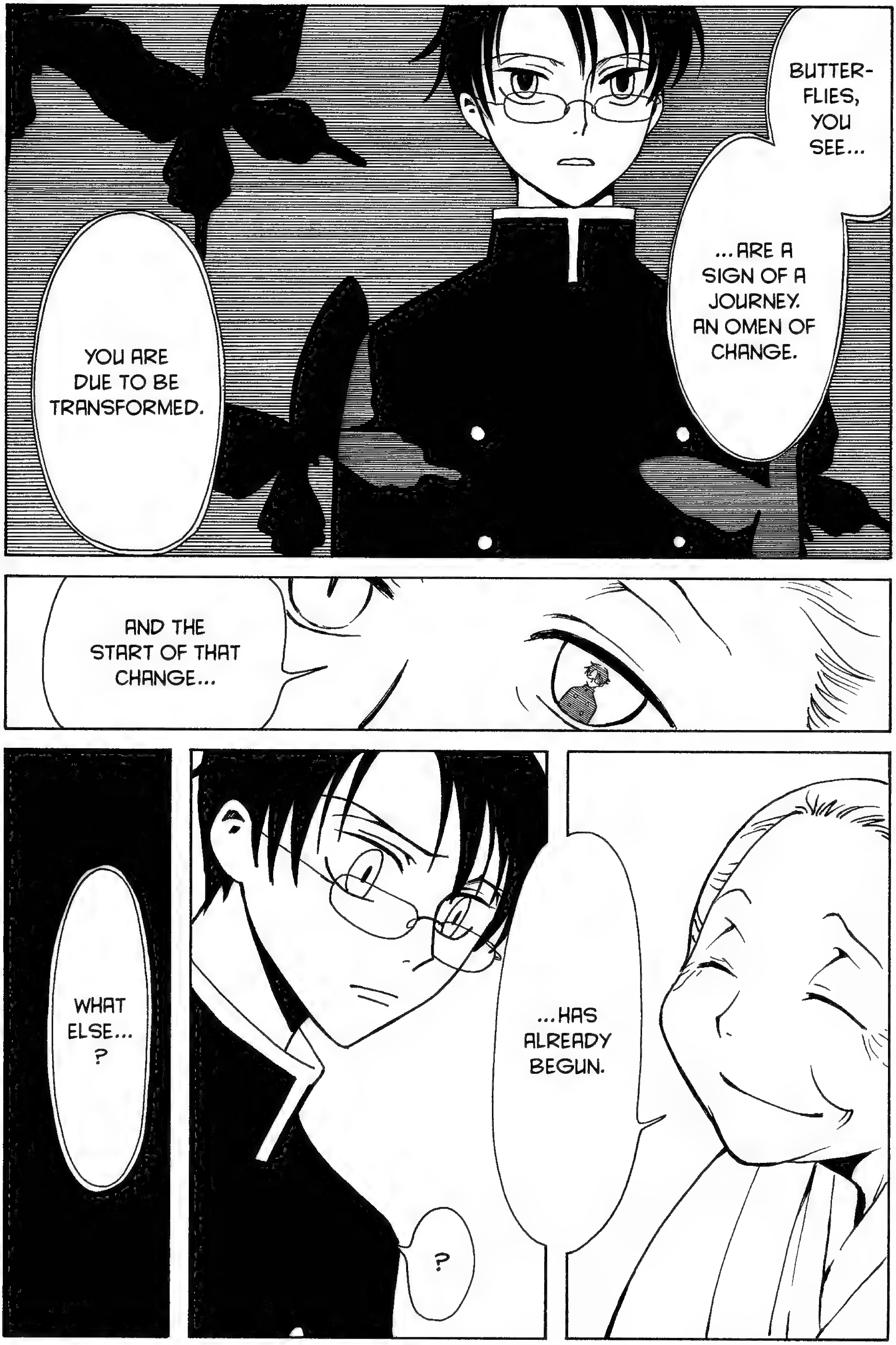
IT'S THE SAME WITH ANY WORK.
ONE WORKS TO THE EXTENT THAT ONE IS PAID.
AND ONE IS PAID COMPENSATORY TO ONE'S WORK.
THAT'S WHAT A PROFESSIONAL IS.
EVEN THOUGH A FORTUNE TELLER OFFERS RESULTS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO CONFIRM...
...IT DOESN'T GIVE A PERSON LICENSE TO LIE OR DO LESS THAN THEIR UTMOST.
A CUSTOMER COMES TO THE FORTUNE TELLER WITH THE ARDENT HOPE OF GETTING A REAL DIVINATION, AND IT'S RUDE TO THAT HOPE TO DO LESS THAN ONE'S BEST.
NO, I'M WRONG.
A FORTUNE IS CONNECTED TO THE VERY LIFE OF THE SEEKER.
THE WORD "RUDE" PUTS IT TOO LIGHTLY.

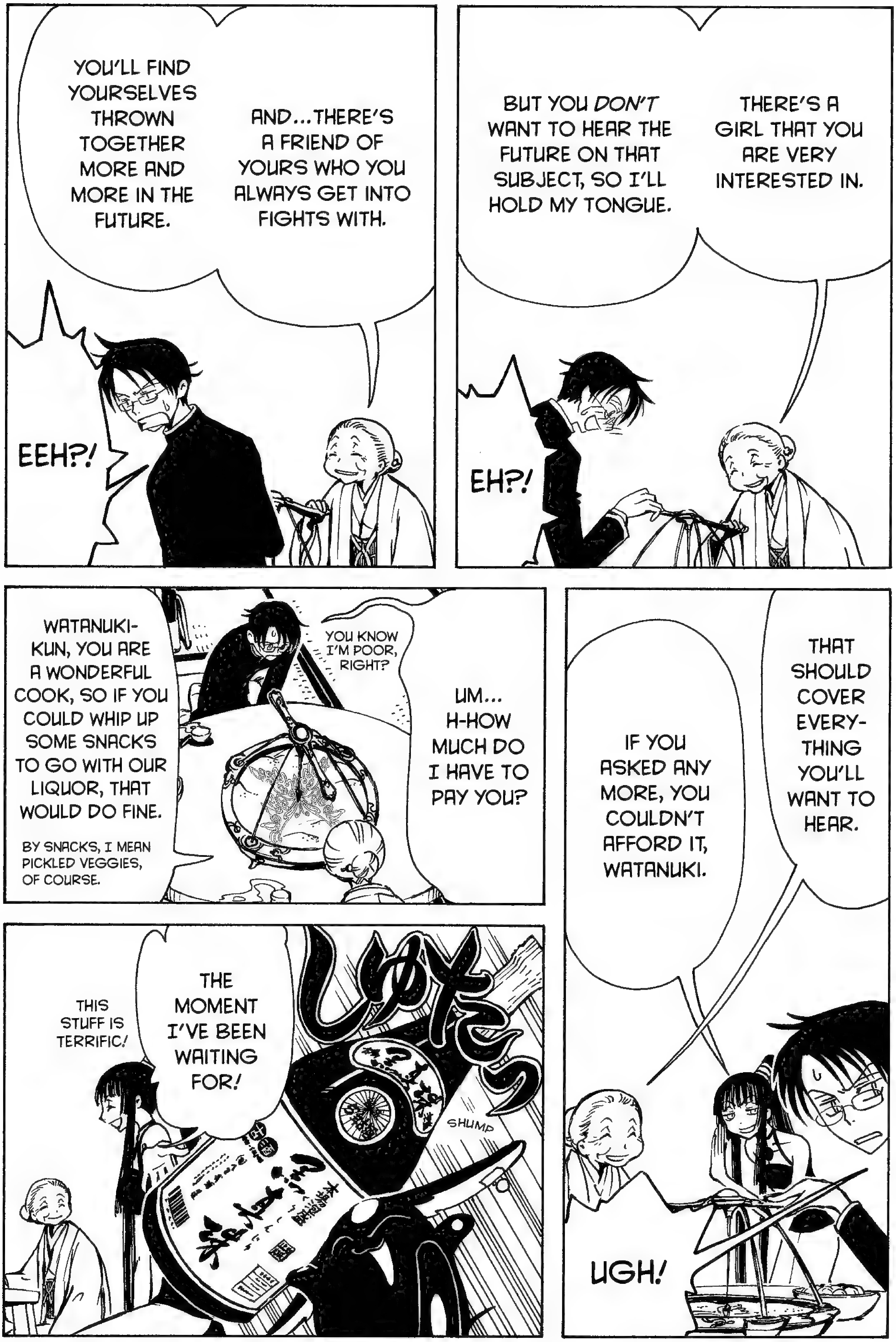

FOR THAT REASON, *TRUE* FORTUNE TELLERS...
S S S S
...RISK THEIR VERY LIVES WITH EACH AND EVERY FORTUNE.
BE AT EASE.
YOUR PARENTS HAVE SAFELY PASSED INTO THE AFTERLIFE.

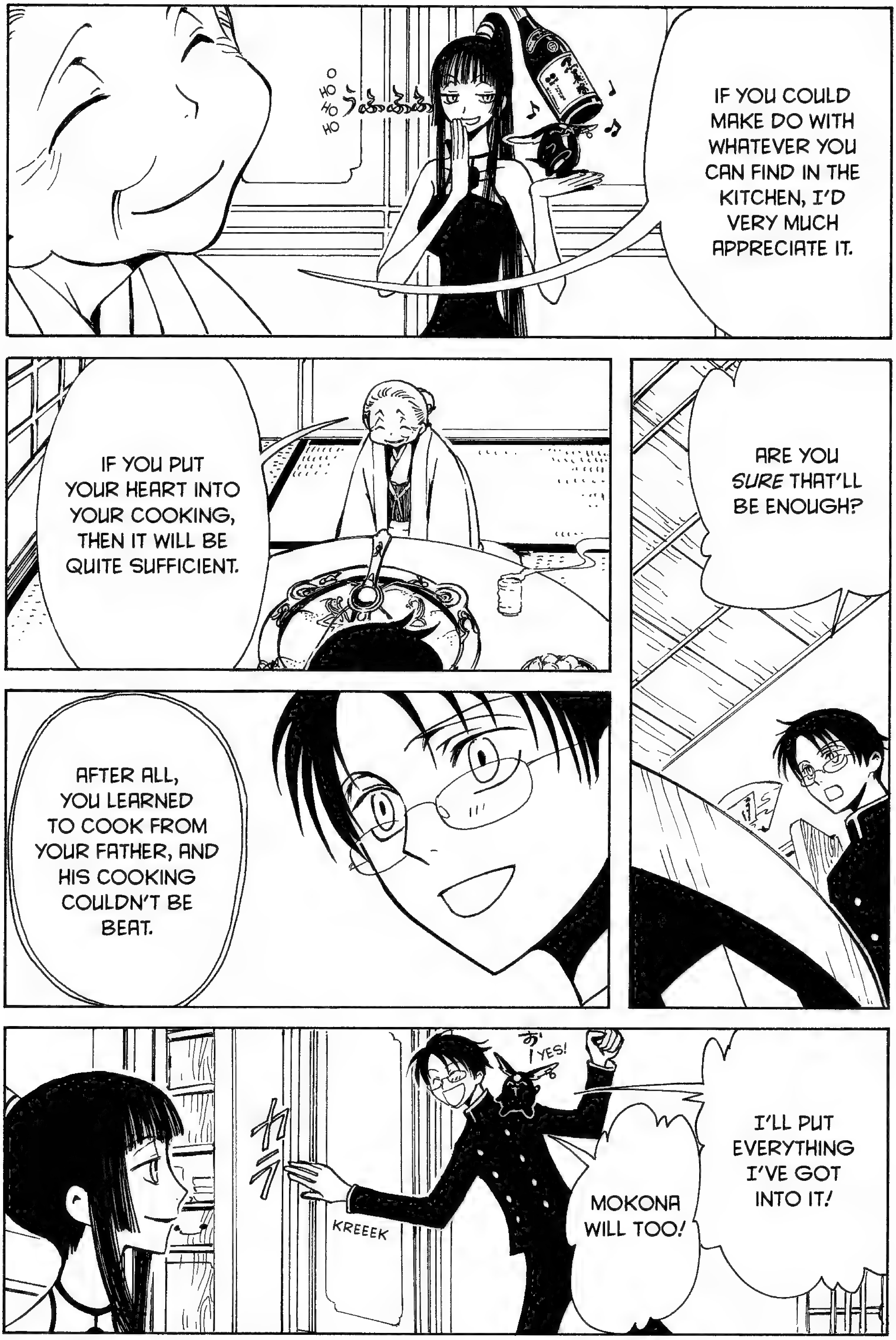

IT WAS A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT THEY WERE IN.
...THAT TOOK THEIR LIVES IN THE ACT OF SAVING YOU.
BUT NOW, THEY FEEL NO PAIN.
THEY ARE BOTH AT PEACE.
AND THEY ARE HAPPY THAT YOU GREW INTO SUCH AN UPSTANDING, NICE YOUNG MAN.

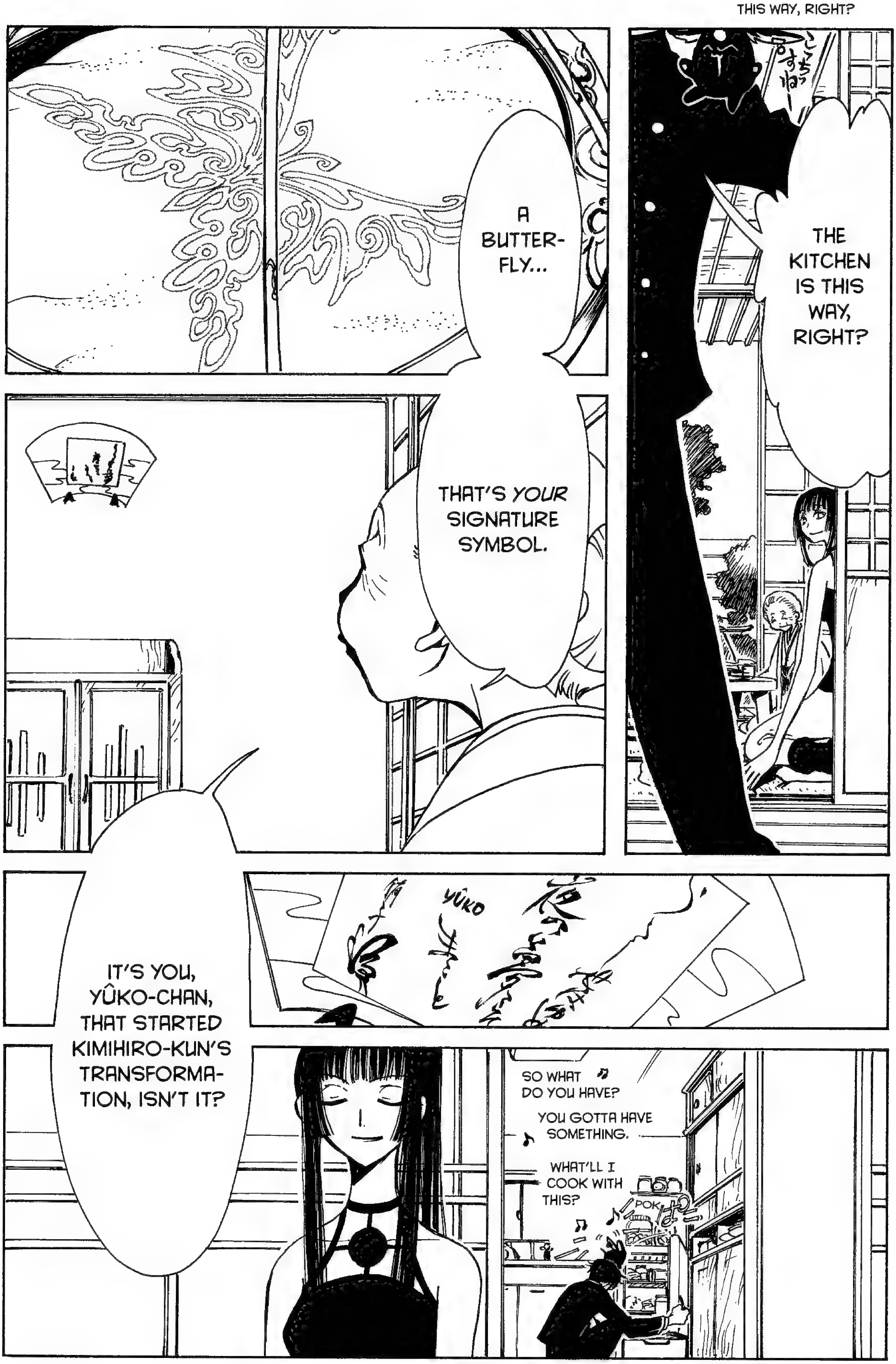

I— IS THAT RIGHT?
..... GOOD. I'M GLAD.


AH! THERE IS ONE THING!
THE FACT THAT YOU SEE VERY STRANGE SIGHTS WORRIES THEM.
AND YOU'VE BEEN MEETING SOMEONE RECENTLY...
OHH ... I GET IT.
THIS IS WHAT YOU FOLLOWED...
...TO GET TO ME.

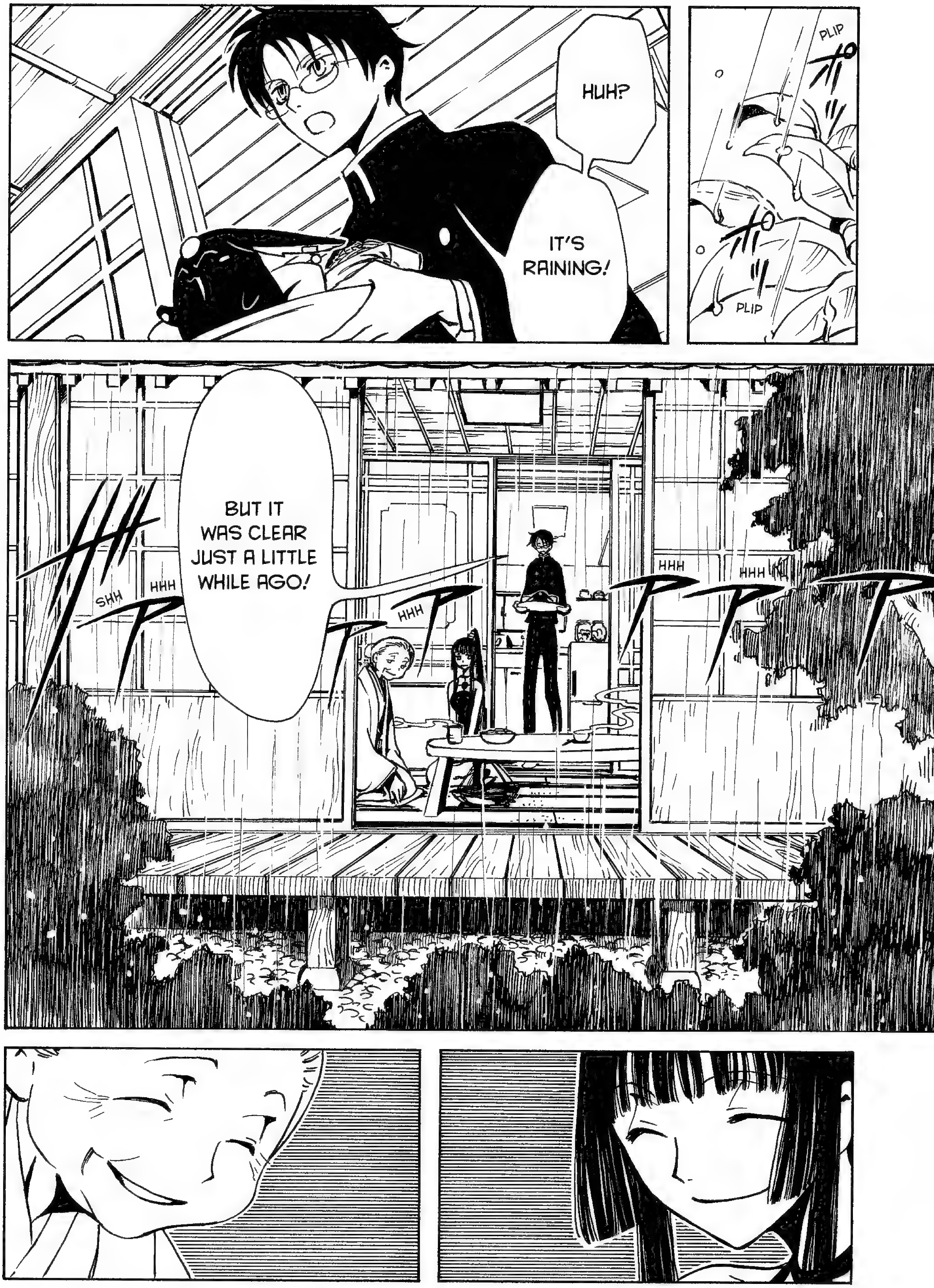

BUTTERFLIES, YOU SEE...
...ARE A SIGN OF A JOURNEY. AN OMEN OF CHANGE.
YOU ARE DUE TO BE TRANSFORMED.
AND THE START OF THAT CHANGE...
...HAS ALREADY BEGUN.
?
WHAT ELSE...?


THERE'S A GIRL THAT YOU ARE VERY INTERESTED IN.
BUT YOU *DON'T* WANT TO HEAR THE FUTURE ON THAT SUBJECT, SO I'LL HOLD MY TONGUE.
EH?!
AND...THERE'S A FRIEND OF YOURS WHO YOU ALWAYS GET INTO FIGHTS WITH.
YOU'LL FIND YOURSELVES THROWN TOGETHER MORE AND MORE IN THE FUTURE.
EEH?!
THAT SHOULD COVER EVERYTHING YOU'LL WANT TO HEAR.
IF YOU ASKED ANY MORE, YOU COULDN'T AFFORD IT, WATANUKI.
UGH!
UM... H-HOW MUCH DO I HAVE TO PAY YOU?
YOU KNOW I'M POOR, RIGHT?
WATANUKI-KUN, YOU ARE A WONDERFUL COOK, SO IF YOU COULD WHIP UP SOME SNACKS TO GO WITH OUR LIQUOR, THAT WOULD DO FINE.
BY SNACKS, I MEAN PICKLED VEGGIES, OF COURSE.
THE MOMENT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
THIS STUFF IS TERRIFIC!
SHUMP

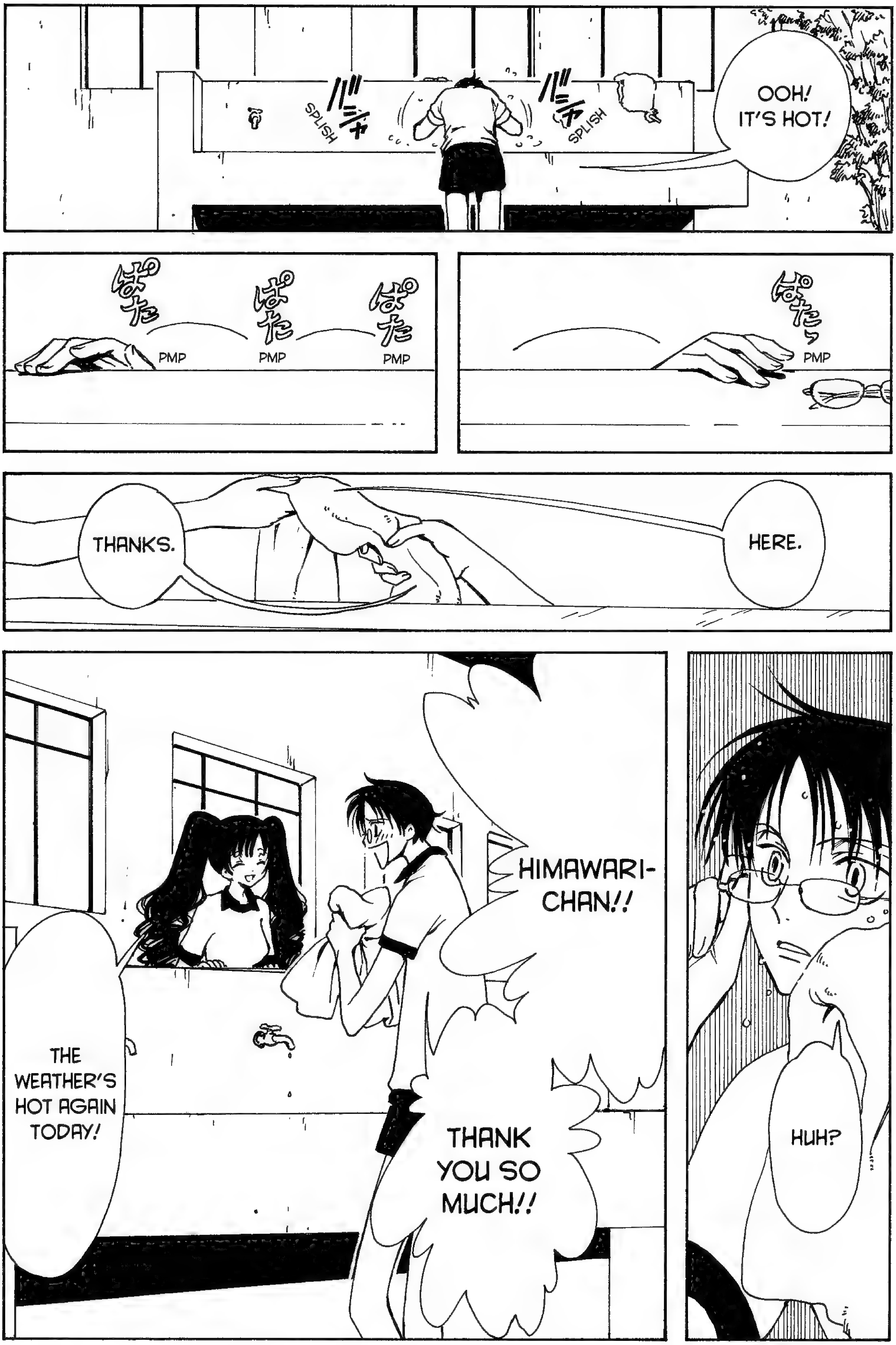

IF YOU COULD MAKE DO WITH WHATEVER YOU CAN FIND IN THE KITCHEN, I'D VERY MUCH APPRECIATE IT.
うふふふ
HO HO HO
ARE YOU *SURE* THAT'LL BE ENOUGH?
IF YOU PUT YOUR HEART INTO YOUR COOKING, THEN IT WILL BE QUITE SUFFICIENT.
AFTER ALL, YOU LEARNED TO COOK FROM YOUR FATHER, AND HIS COOKING COULDN'T BE BEAT.
I'LL PUT EVERYTHING I'VE GOT INTO IT!
MOKONA WILL TOO!
お
YES!
カラ
KREEEK

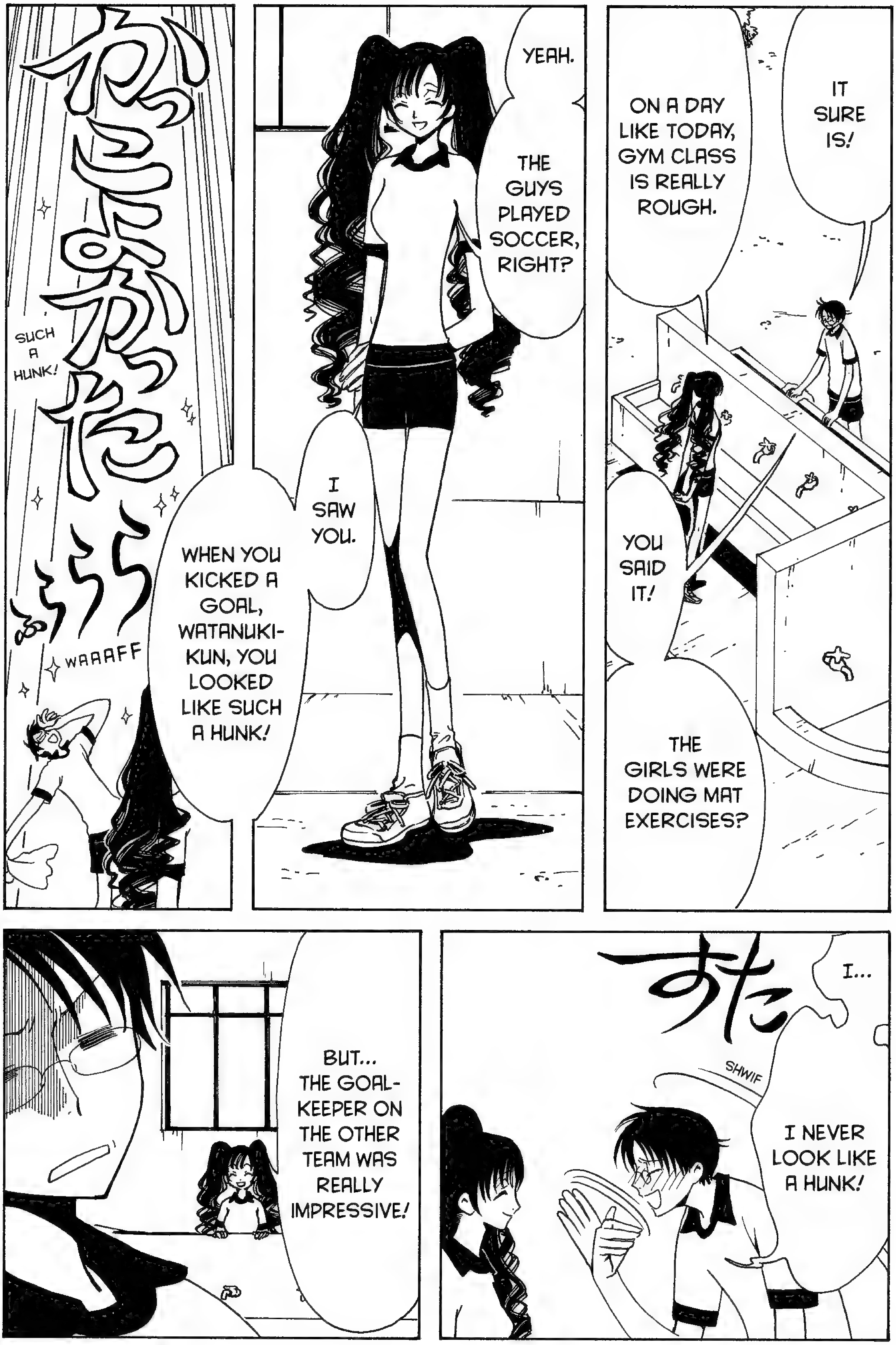

THIS WAY, RIGHT?
THE KITCHEN IS THIS WAY, RIGHT?
A BUTTERFLY...
THAT'S *YOUR* SIGNATURE SYMBOL.
IT'S YOU, YÛKO-CHAN, THAT STARTED KIMIHIRO-KUN'S TRANSFORMATION, ISN'T IT?
YÛKO
SO WHAT DO YOU HAVE?
YOU GOTTA HAVE SOMETHING.
WHAT'LL I COOK WITH THIS?
POK

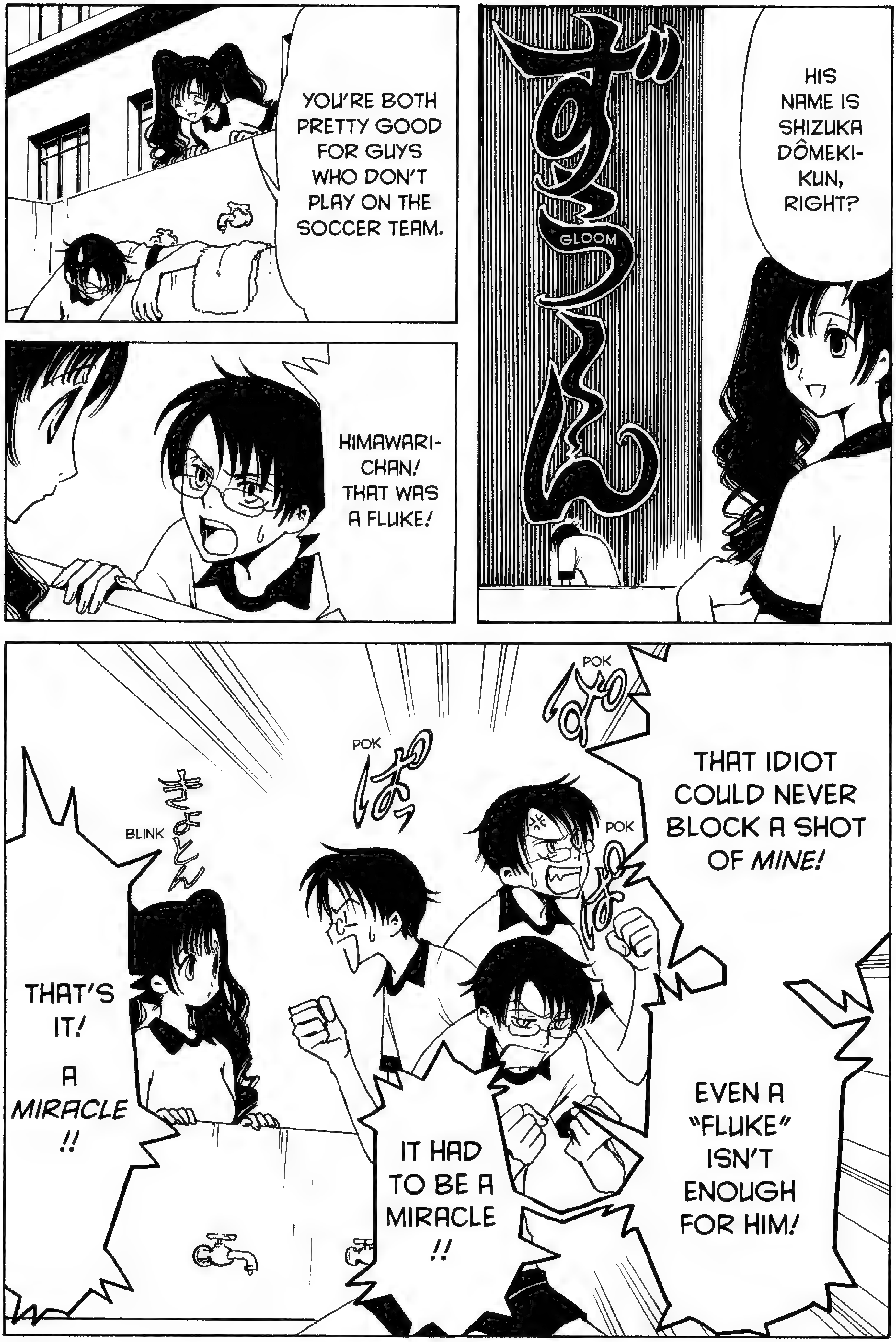
AND WHAT WILL HE TRANSFORM INTO?
IT WOULD BE FUN TO WATCH.
あと一振り!
OKAY, ONE MORE SHAKE!
おう!
YES!
ぱっ
SHKK
ONE QUESTION.
WHAT WILL THE WEATHER BE LIKE TONIGHT?
どっこいしょ
UMPH!
RAIN, I WOULD SAY.

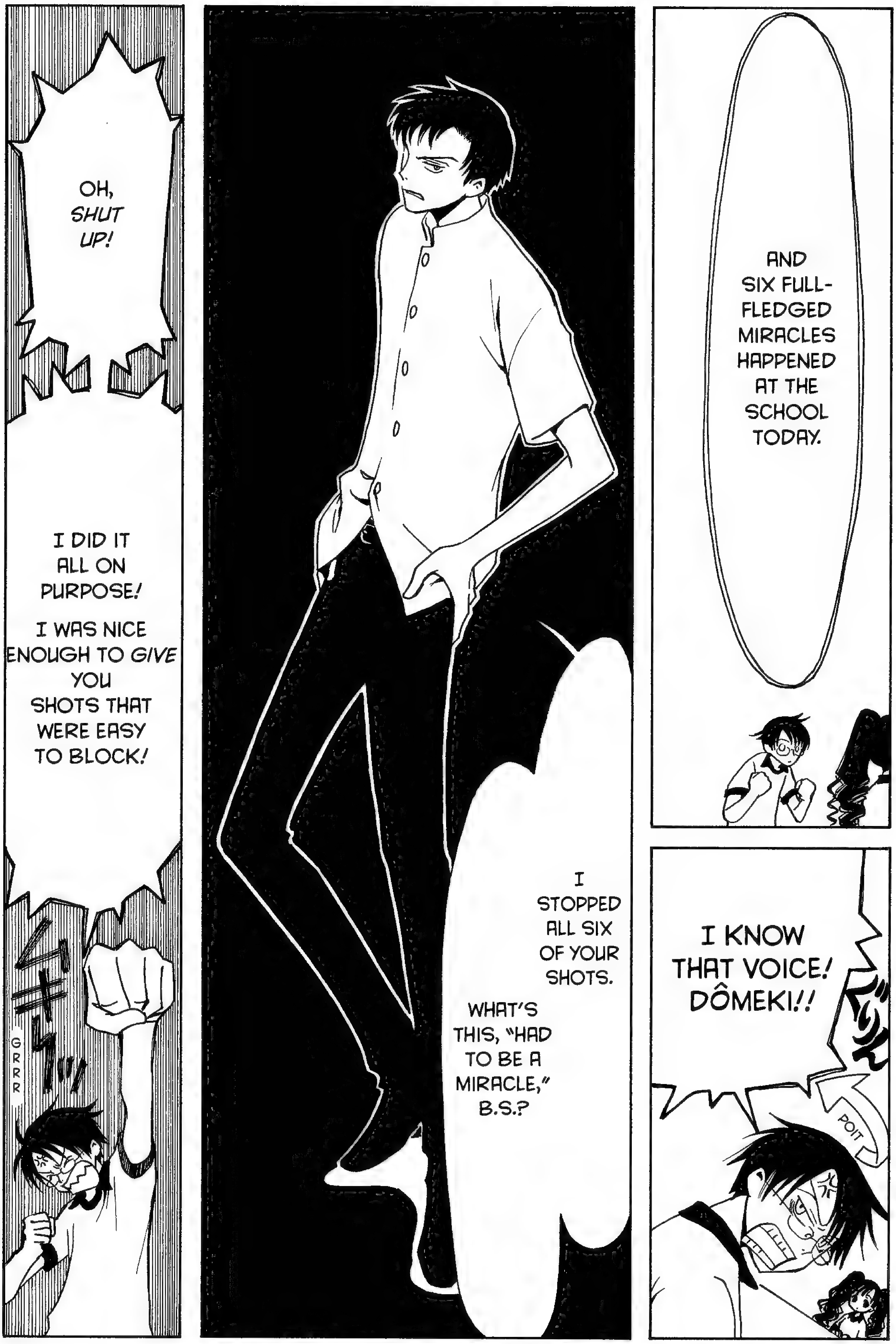

PLIP
PLIP
HUH?
IT'S RAINING!
SHH
HHH
HHH
HHH
HHH
BUT IT WAS CLEAR JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO!

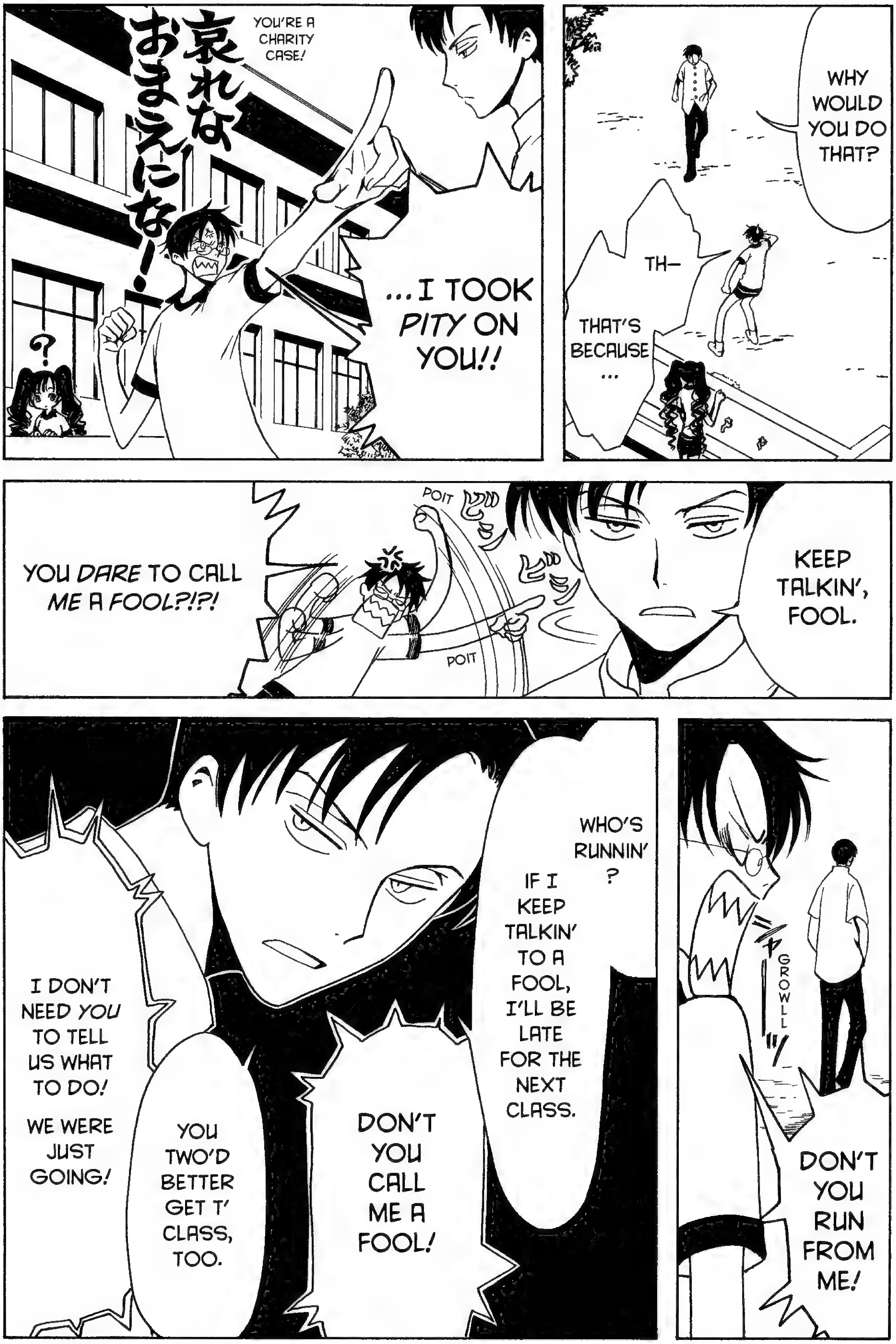
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

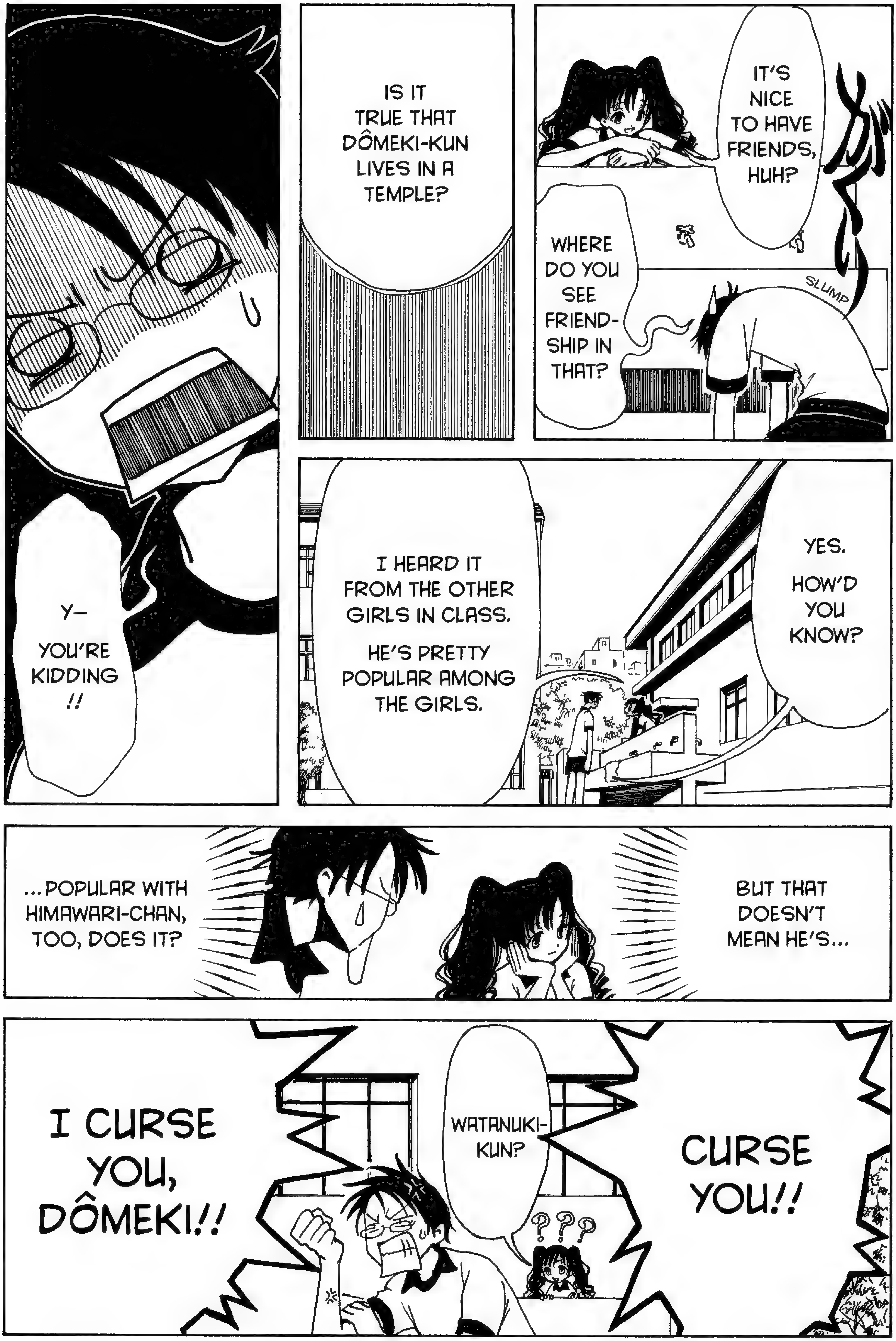

バシャ
SPLISH
バシャ
SPLISH
OOH! IT'S HOT!
ぱたっ
PMP
ぱた
PMP
ぱた
PMP
ぱた
PMP
HERE.
THANKS.
HUH?
HIMAWARI-CHAN!!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!!
THE WEATHER'S HOT AGAIN TODAY!

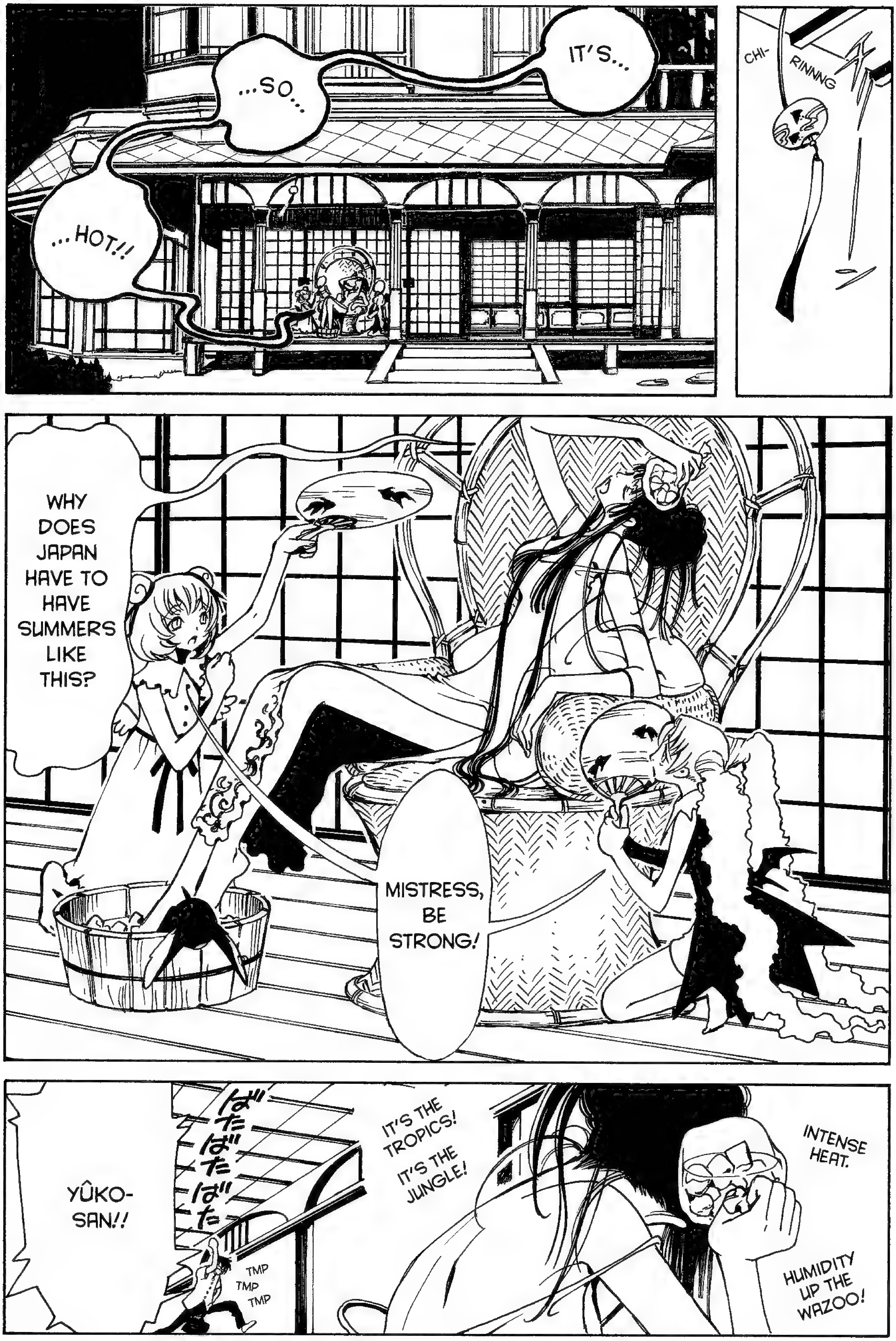

ON A DAY LIKE TODAY, GYM CLASS IS REALLY ROUGH.
IT SURE IS!
THE GIRLS WERE DOING MAT EXERCISES?
YOU SAID IT!
YEAH.
THE GUYS PLAYED SOCCER, RIGHT?
I SAW YOU.
WHEN YOU KICKED A GOAL, WATANUKI-KUN, YOU LOOKED LIKE SUCH A HUNK!
かっこよかった
SUCH A HUNK!
ふらら
WAAAFF
I...
I NEVER LOOK LIKE A HUNK!
すた
SHWIF
BUT... THE GOAL-KEEPER ON THE OTHER TEAM WAS REALLY IMPRESSIVE!

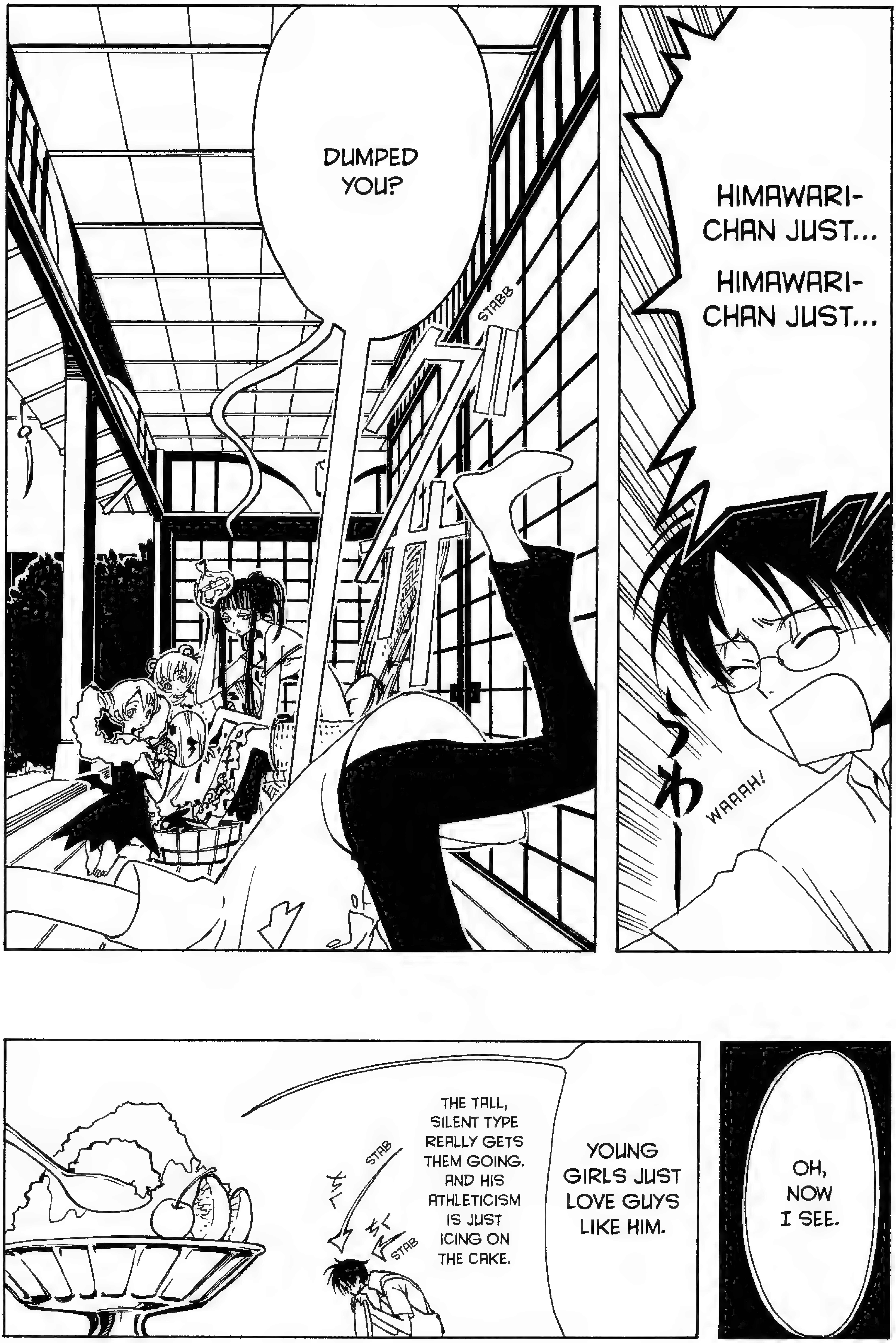

HIS NAME IS SHIZUKA DÔMEKI-KUN, RIGHT?
ずーん
GLOOM
YOU'RE BOTH PRETTY GOOD FOR GUYS WHO DON'T PLAY ON THE SOCCER TEAM.
HIMAWARI-CHAN! THAT WAS A FLUKE!
POK
ぽこ
THAT IDIOT COULD NEVER BLOCK A SHOT OF *MINE!*
POK
POK
BLINK
きょとん
EVEN A "FLUKE" ISN'T ENOUGH FOR HIM!
IT HAD TO BE A MIRACLE!!
THAT'S IT! A *MIRACLE*!!

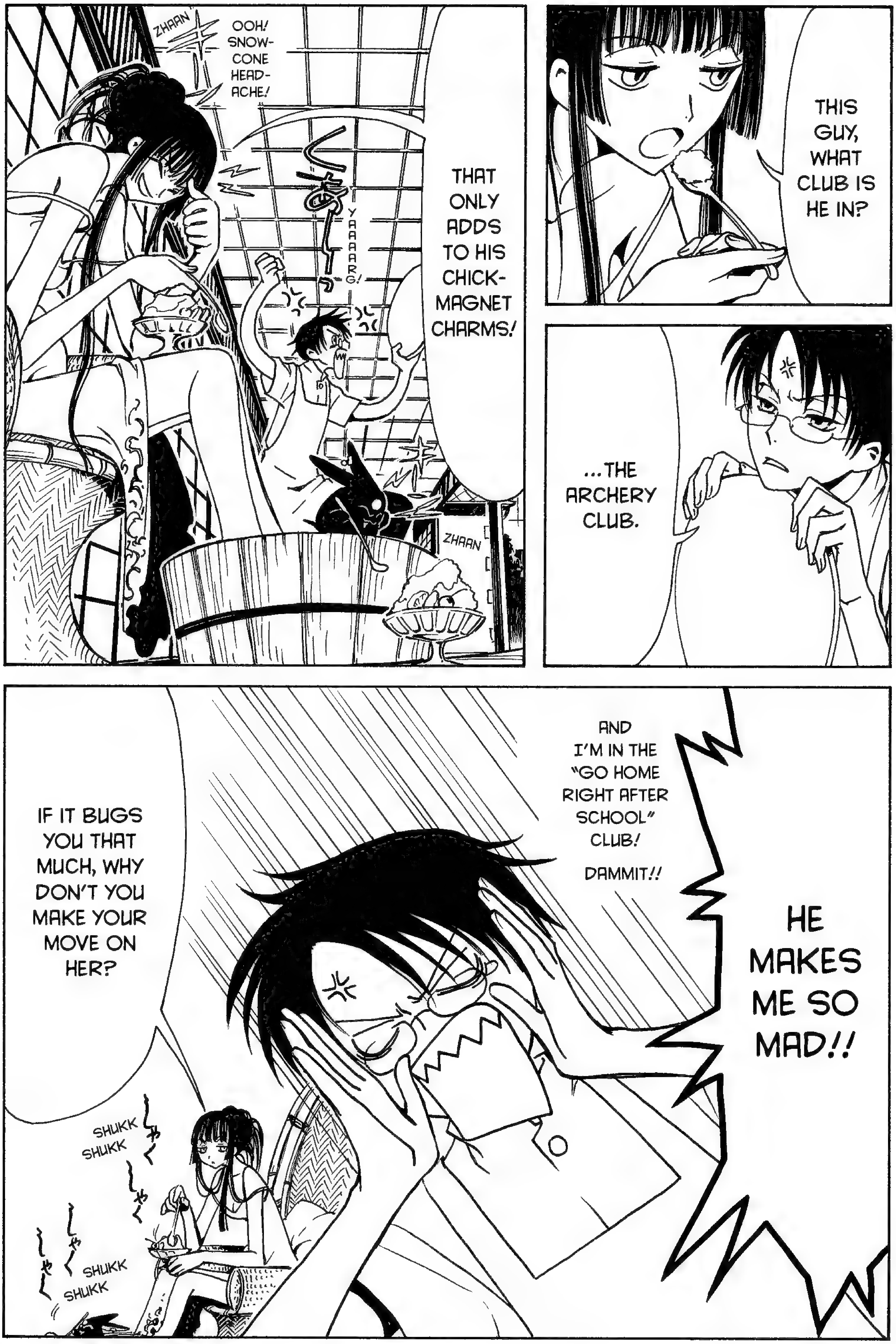

AND SIX FULL-FLEDGED MIRACLES HAPPENED AT THE SCHOOL TODAY.
I KNOW THAT VOICE! DÔMEKI!!
POIT
I STOPPED ALL SIX OF YOUR SHOTS.
WHAT'S THIS, "HAD TO BE A MIRACLE," B.S.?
OH, *SHUT UP!*
I DID IT ALL ON PURPOSE!
I WAS NICE ENOUGH TO *GIVE* YOU SHOTS THAT WERE EASY TO BLOCK!
GRRR

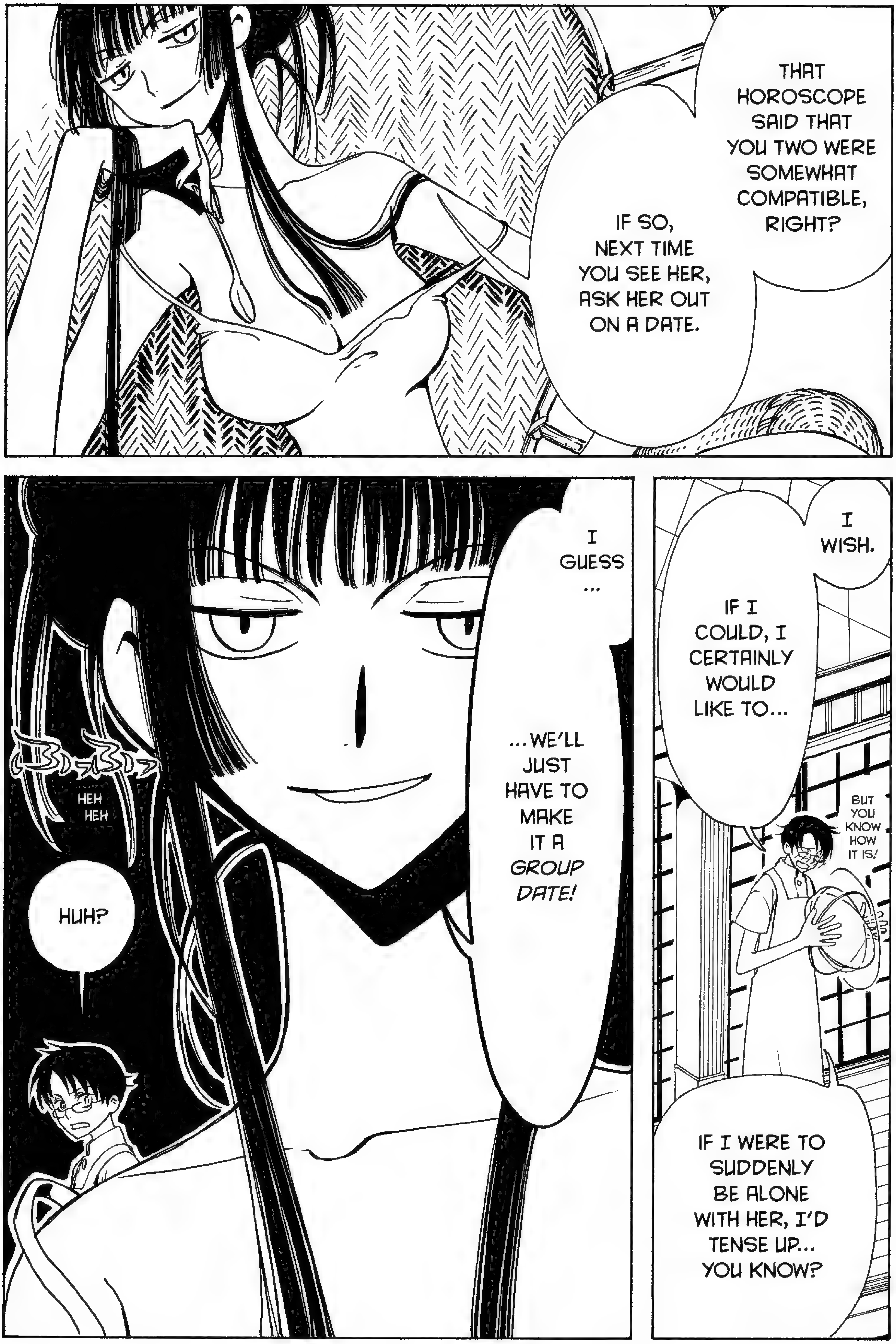

WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?
TH—
THAT'S BECAUSE ...
...I TOOK *PITY* ON YOU!!
哀れなおまえにな！
YOU'RE A CHARITY CASE!
?
KEEP TALKIN', FOOL.
POIT
YOU *DARE* TO CALL *ME A FOOL?!?!*
POIT
DON'T YOU RUN FROM ME!
GROWL
WHO'S RUNNIN'?
IF I KEEP TALKIN' TO A FOOL, I'LL BE LATE FOR THE NEXT CLASS.
DON'T YOU CALL ME A FOOL!
YOU TWO'D BETTER GET T' CLASS, TOO.
I DON'T NEED *YOU* TO TELL US WHAT TO DO!
WE WERE JUST GOING!

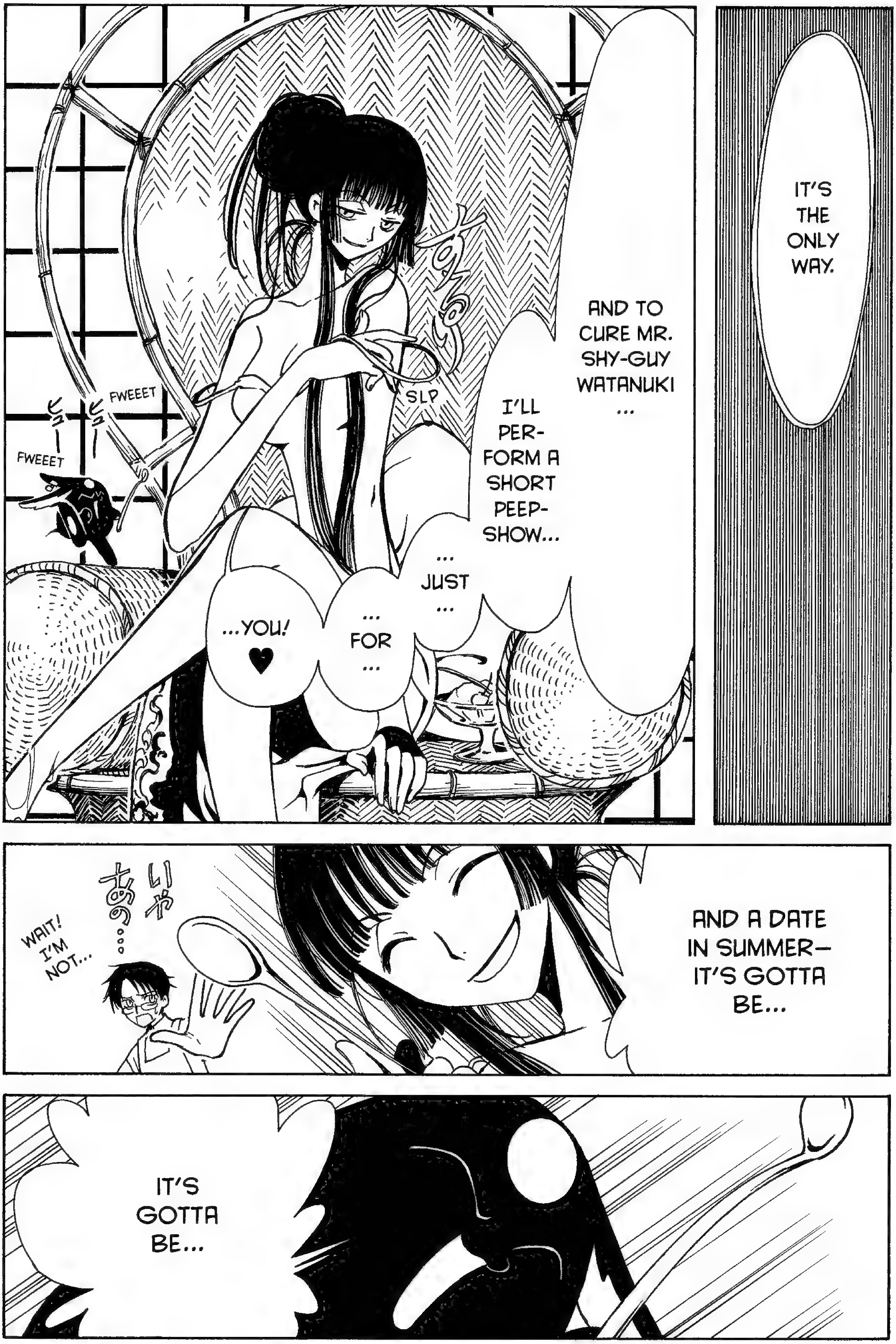

IT'S NICE TO HAVE FRIENDS, HUH?
WHERE DO YOU SEE FRIENDSHIP IN THAT?
SLUMP
IS IT TRUE THAT DÔMEKI-KUN LIVES IN A TEMPLE?
YES.
HOW'D YOU KNOW?
I HEARD IT FROM THE OTHER GIRLS IN CLASS.
HE'S PRETTY POPULAR AMONG THE GIRLS.
Y— YOU'RE KIDDING!!
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE'S...
...POPULAR WITH HIMAWARI-CHAN, TOO, DOES IT?
CURSE YOU!!
WATANUKI-KUN?
???
I CURSE YOU, DÔMEKI!!

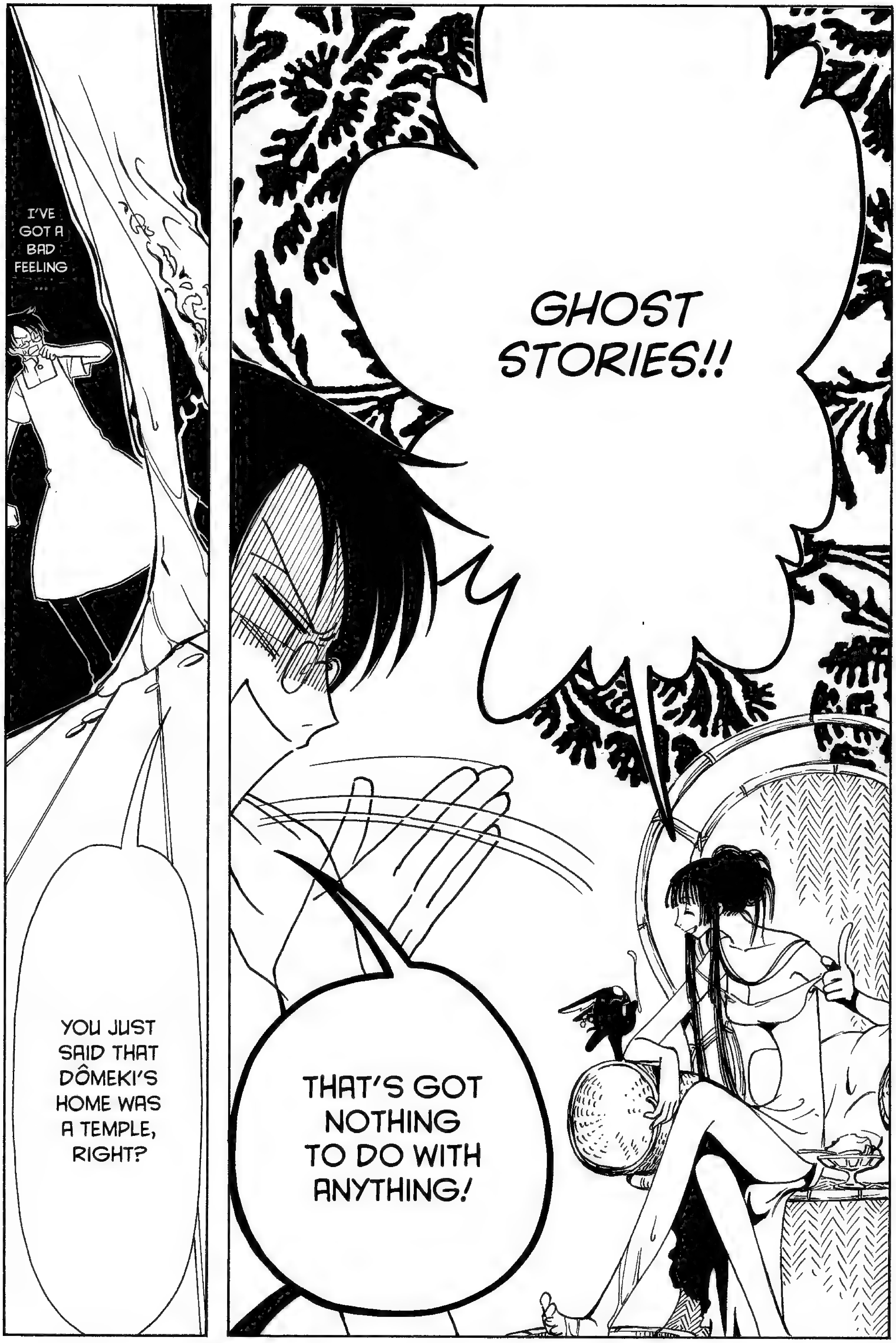

CHI-RINNNG
IT'S...
...SO...
...HOT!!
WHY DOES JAPAN HAVE TO HAVE SUMMERS LIKE THIS?
MISTRESS, BE STRONG!
INTENSE HEAT.
HUMIDITY UP THE WAZOO!
IT'S THE TROPICS!
IT'S THE JUNGLE!
ばたばたばた
TMP TMP TMP
YÛKO-SAN!!

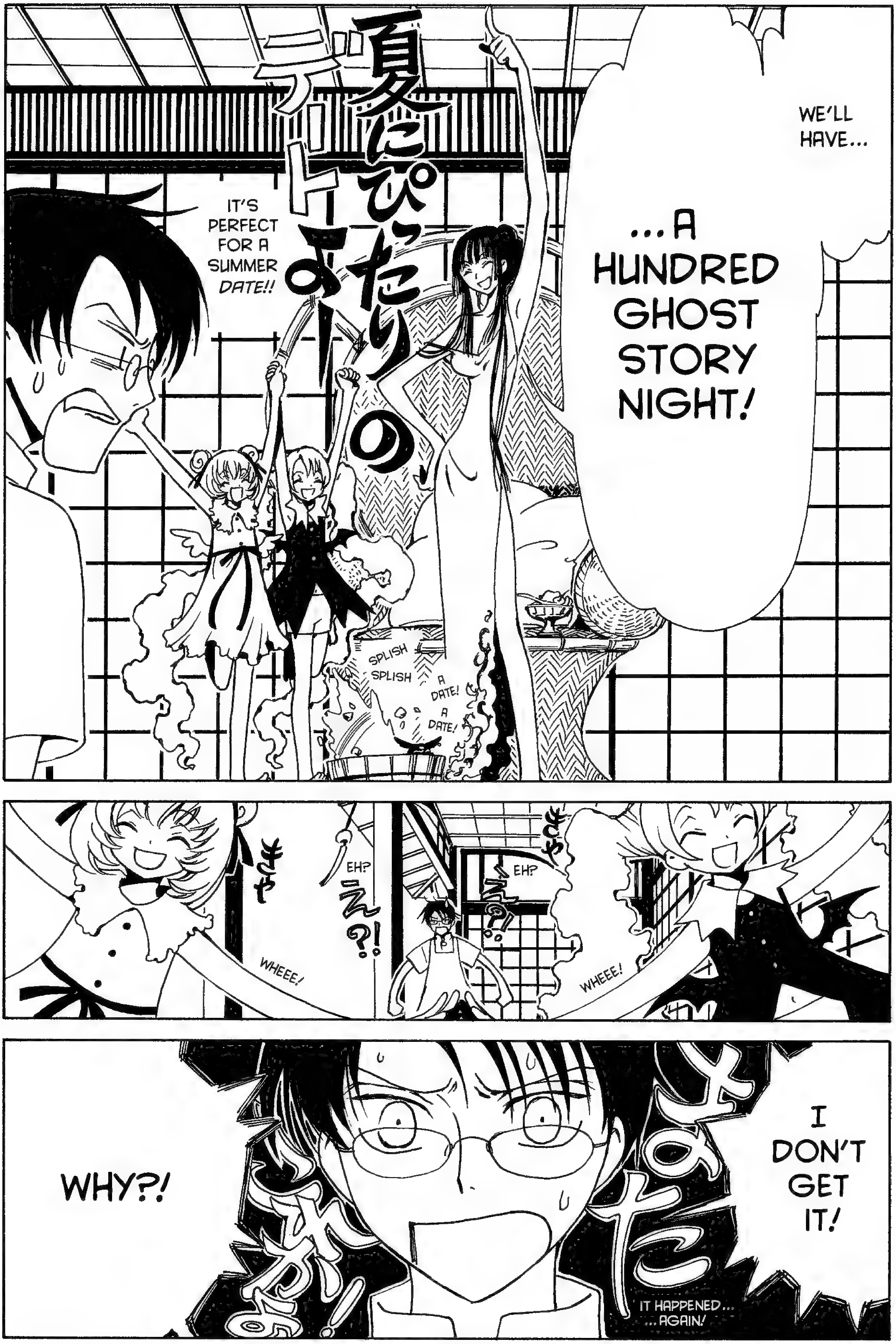

HIMAWARI-CHAN JUST...
HIMAWARI-CHAN JUST...
うわー
WAAAH!
DUMPED YOU?
STABB
OH, NOW I SEE.
YOUNG GIRLS JUST LOVE GUYS LIKE HIM.
THE TALL, SILENT TYPE REALLY GETS THEM GOING. AND HIS ATHLETICISM IS JUST ICING ON THE CAKE.
STAB
STAB


THIS GUY, WHAT CLUB IS HE IN?
...THE ARCHERY CLUB.
THAT ONLY ADDS TO HIS CHICK-MAGNET CHARMS!
YAAAARG!
OOH! SNOW-CONE HEAD-ACHE!
ZHAAN
ZHAAN
HE MAKES ME SO MAD!!
AND I'M IN THE "GO HOME RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL" CLUB!
DAMMIT!!
IF IT BUGS YOU THAT MUCH, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOUR MOVE ON HER?
SHUKK SHUKK
SHUKK SHUKK

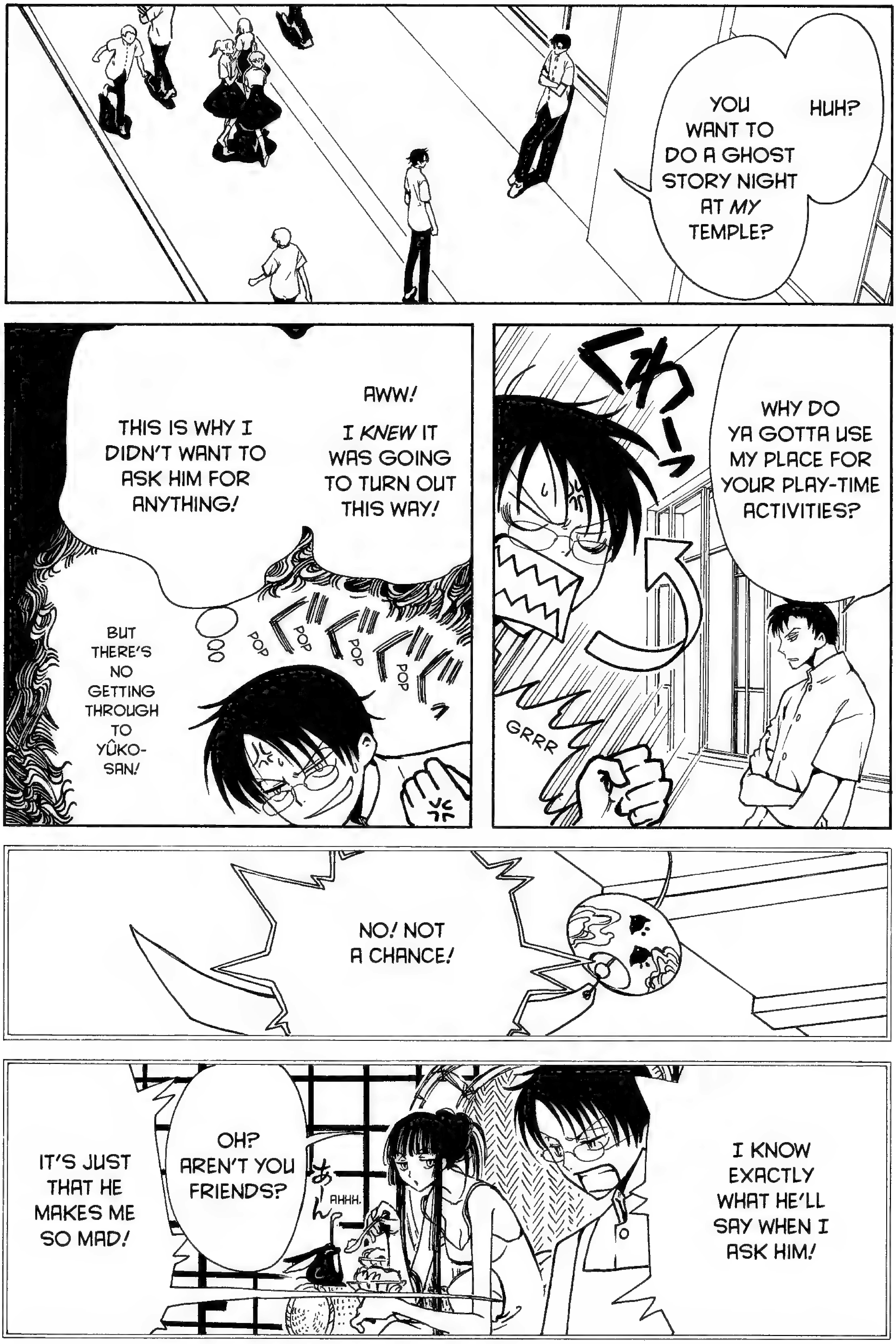

THAT HOROSCOPE SAID THAT YOU TWO WERE SOMEWHAT COMPATIBLE, RIGHT?
IF SO, NEXT TIME YOU SEE HER, ASK HER OUT ON A DATE.
I WISH.
IF I COULD, I CERTAINLY WOULD LIKE TO...
BUT YOU KNOW HOW IT IS!
IF I WERE TO SUDDENLY BE ALONE WITH HER, I'D TENSE UP... YOU KNOW?
I GUESS...
...WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE IT A *GROUP DATE!*
ふっふっ
HEH HEH
HUH?

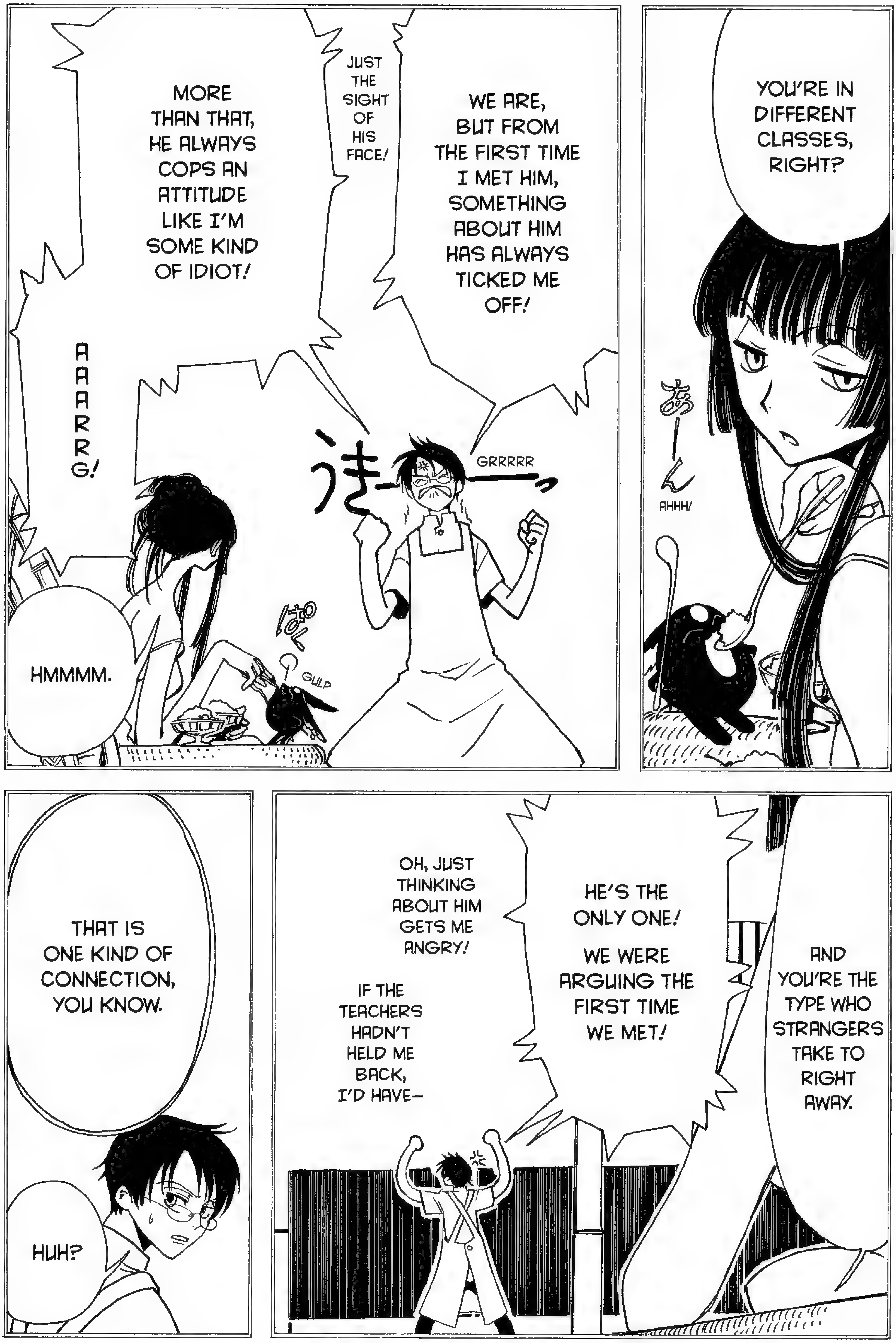

IT'S THE ONLY WAY.
AND TO CURE MR. SHY-GUY WATANUKI ...
I'LL PER-FORM A SHORT PEEP-SHOW...
... JUST ...
... FOR ...
...YOU! ♥
SLP
ヒュー FWEEET
ヒュー FWEEET
AND A DATE IN SUMMER— IT'S GOTTA BE...
いや あの…
WAIT! I'M NOT...
IT'S GOTTA BE...

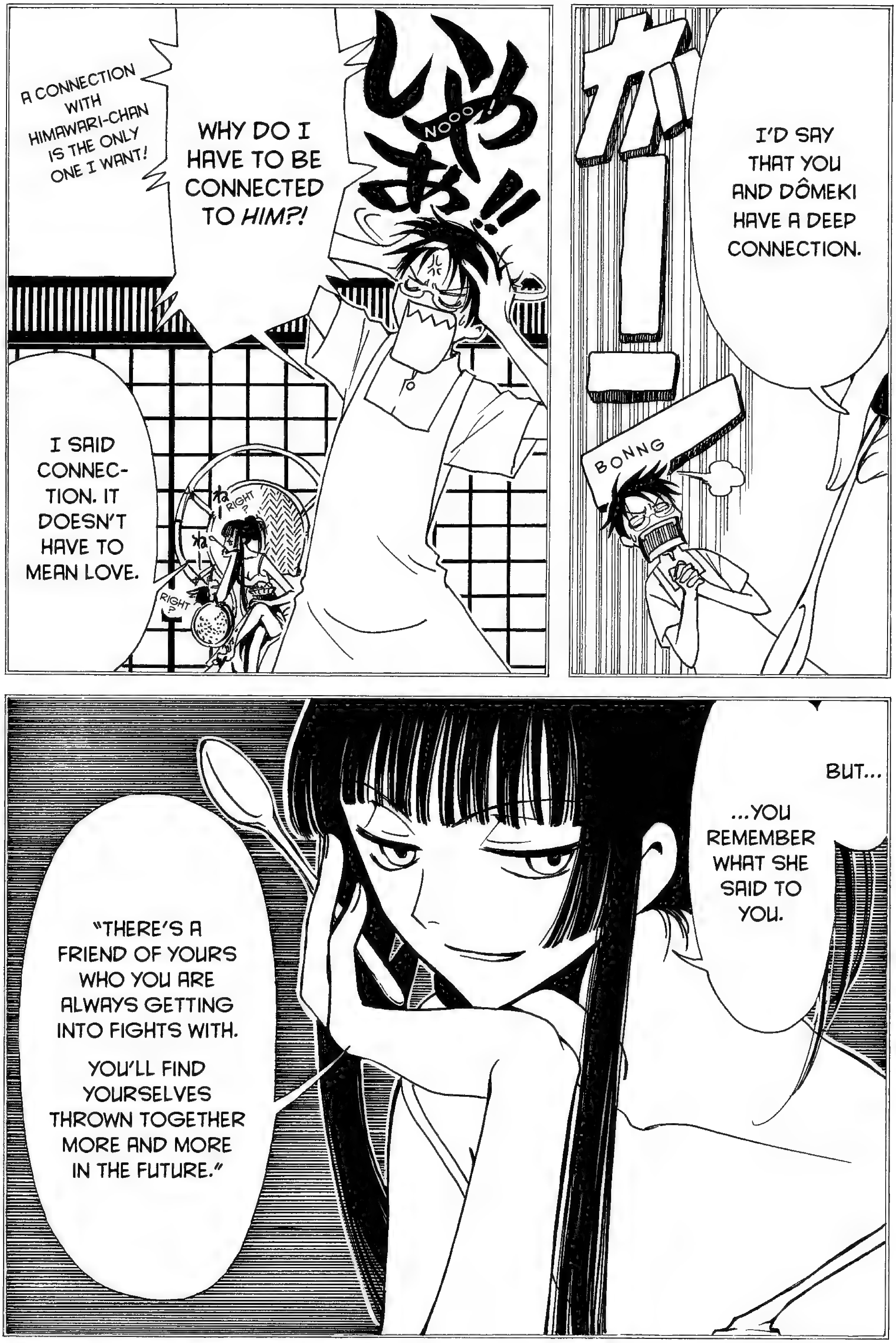

GHOST STORIES!!
THAT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ANYTHING!
I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ...
YOU JUST SAID THAT DÔMEKI'S HOME WAS A TEMPLE, RIGHT?

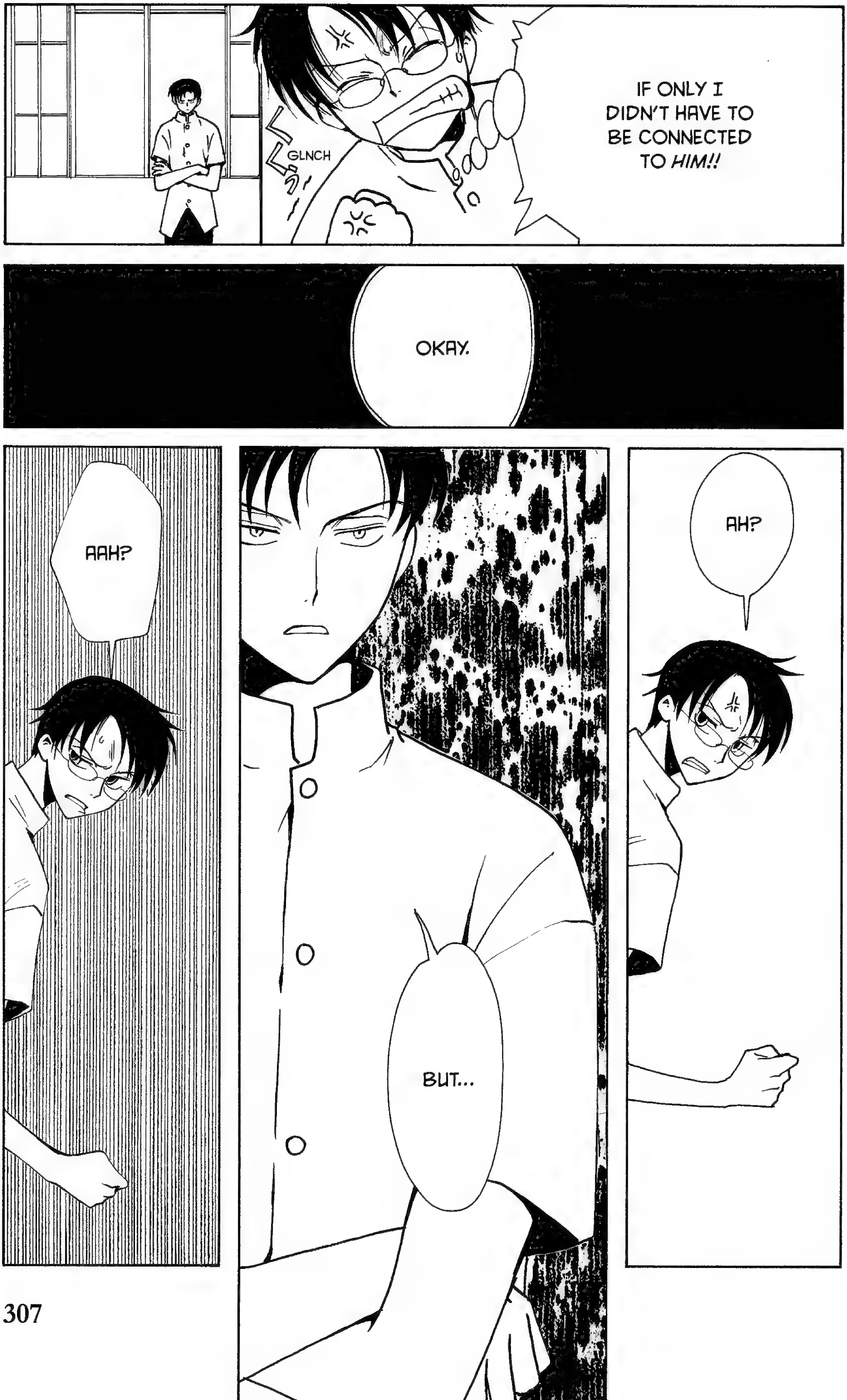

WE'LL HAVE...
...A HUNDRED GHOST STORY NIGHT!
夏にぴったりの
デート
IT'S PERFECT FOR A SUMMER DATE!!
SPLISH SPLISH
A DATE! A DATE!
きゃ
WHEEE!
EH? え?!
EH? え?!
きゃ
WHEEE!
I DON'T GET IT!
また
かよ!
IT HAPPENED... ...AGAIN!
WHY?!

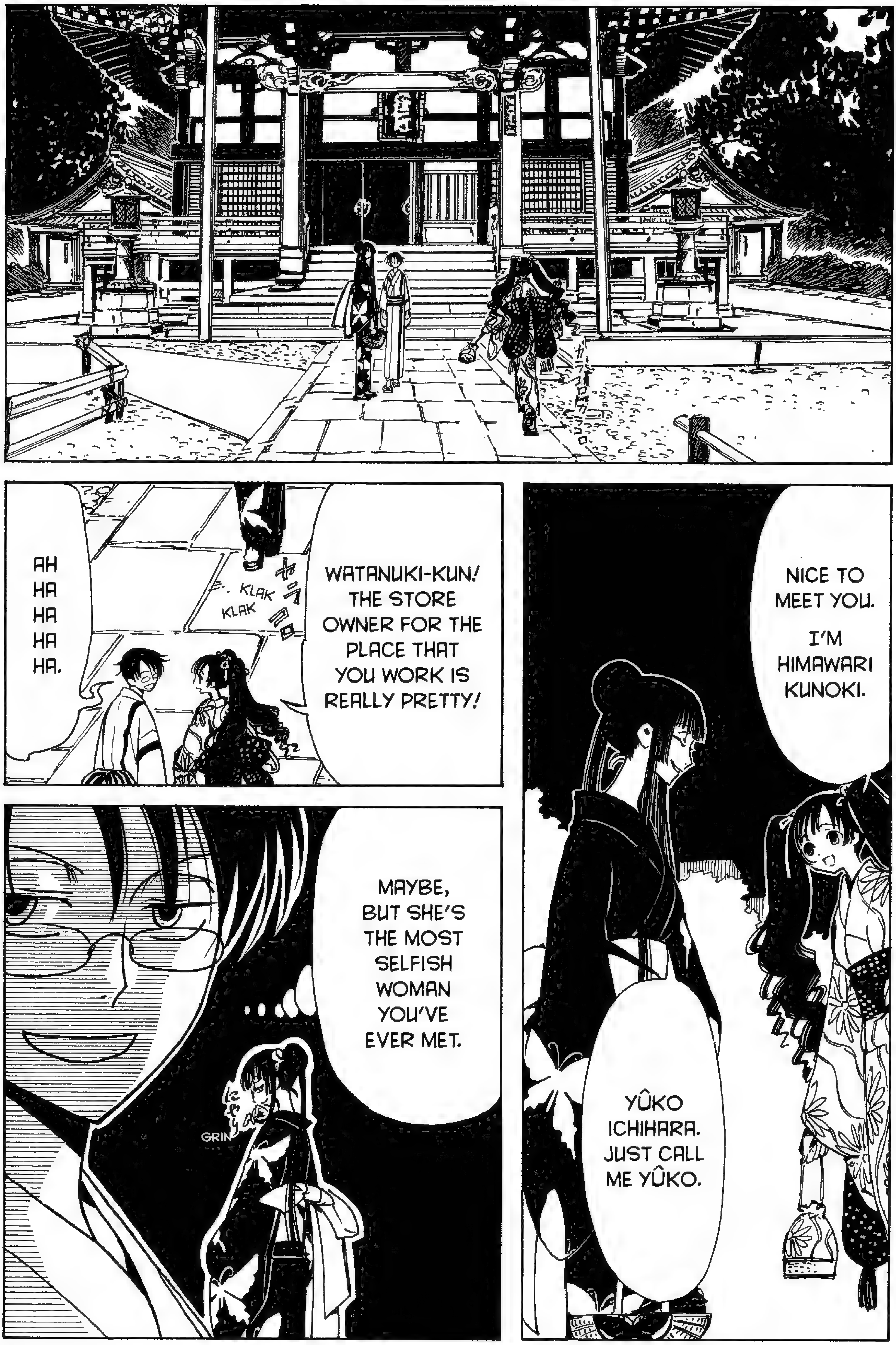
HoLiC
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

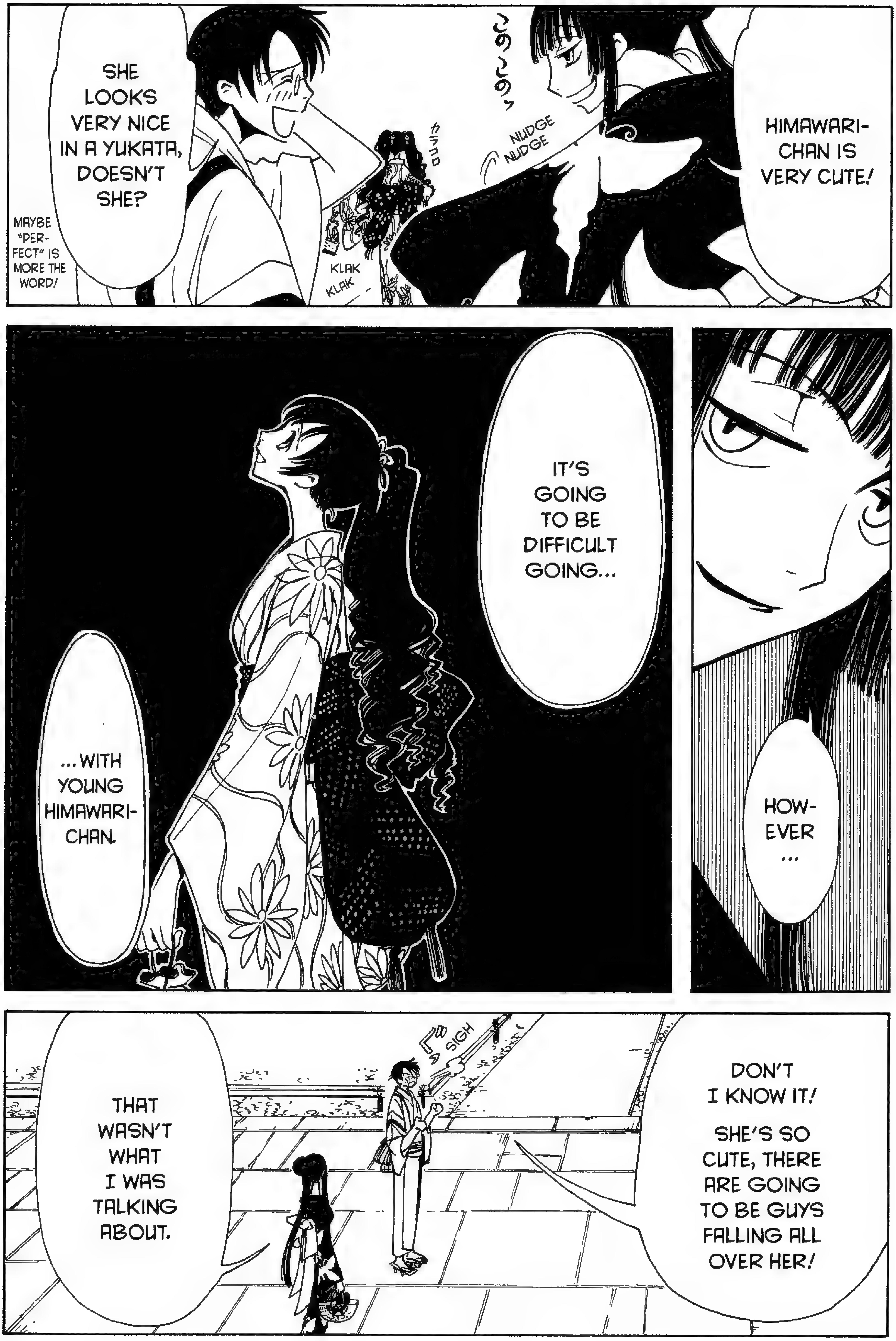

HUH?
YOU WANT TO DO A GHOST STORY NIGHT AT *MY* TEMPLE?
くわーっ
WHY DO YA GOTTA USE MY PLACE FOR YOUR PLAY-TIME ACTIVITIES?
GRRR
AWW! I *KNEW* IT WAS GOING TO TURN OUT THIS WAY!
THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO ASK HIM FOR ANYTHING!
POP POP POP POP
BUT THERE'S NO GETTING THROUGH TO YÛKO-SAN!
NO! NOT A CHANCE!
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE'LL SAY WHEN I ASK HIM!
あーん
AHHH.
OH? AREN'T YOU FRIENDS?
IT'S JUST THAT HE MAKES ME SO MAD!

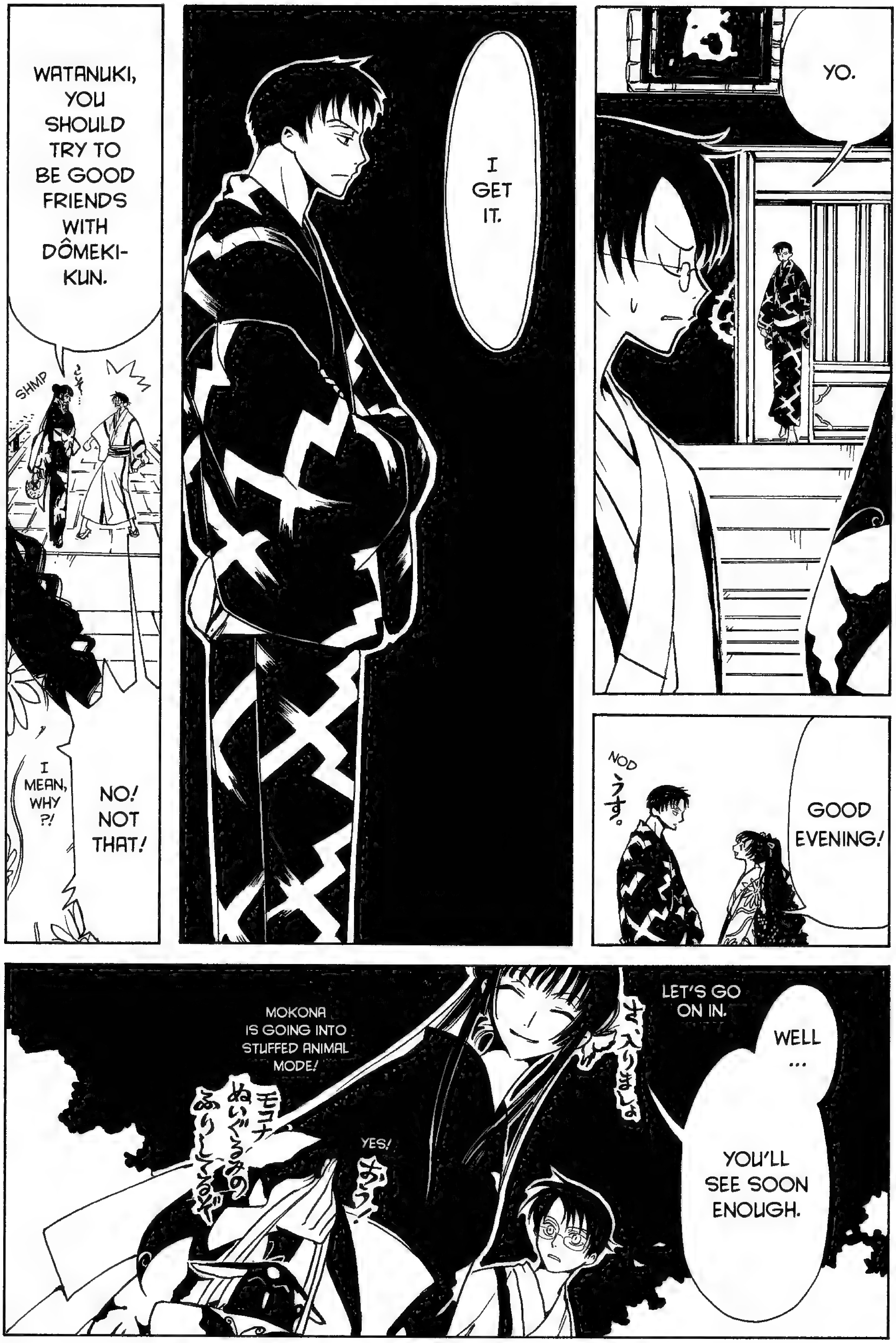

YOU'RE IN DIFFERENT CLASSES, RIGHT?
あーん
AHHH!
WE ARE, BUT FROM THE FIRST TIME I MET HIM, SOMETHING ABOUT HIM HAS ALWAYS TICKED ME OFF!
JUST THE SIGHT OF HIS FACE!
MORE THAN THAT, HE ALWAYS COPS AN ATTITUDE LIKE I'M SOME KIND OF IDIOT!
AAAARRG!
うきーっ
GRRRRR
ぱく
GULP
HMMMM.
AND YOU'RE THE TYPE WHO STRANGERS TAKE TO RIGHT AWAY.
HE'S THE ONLY ONE!
WE WERE ARGUING THE FIRST TIME WE MET!
OH, JUST THINKING ABOUT HIM GETS ME ANGRY!
IF THE TEACHERS HADN'T HELD ME BACK, I'D HAVE—
THAT IS ONE KIND OF CONNECTION, YOU KNOW.
HUH?

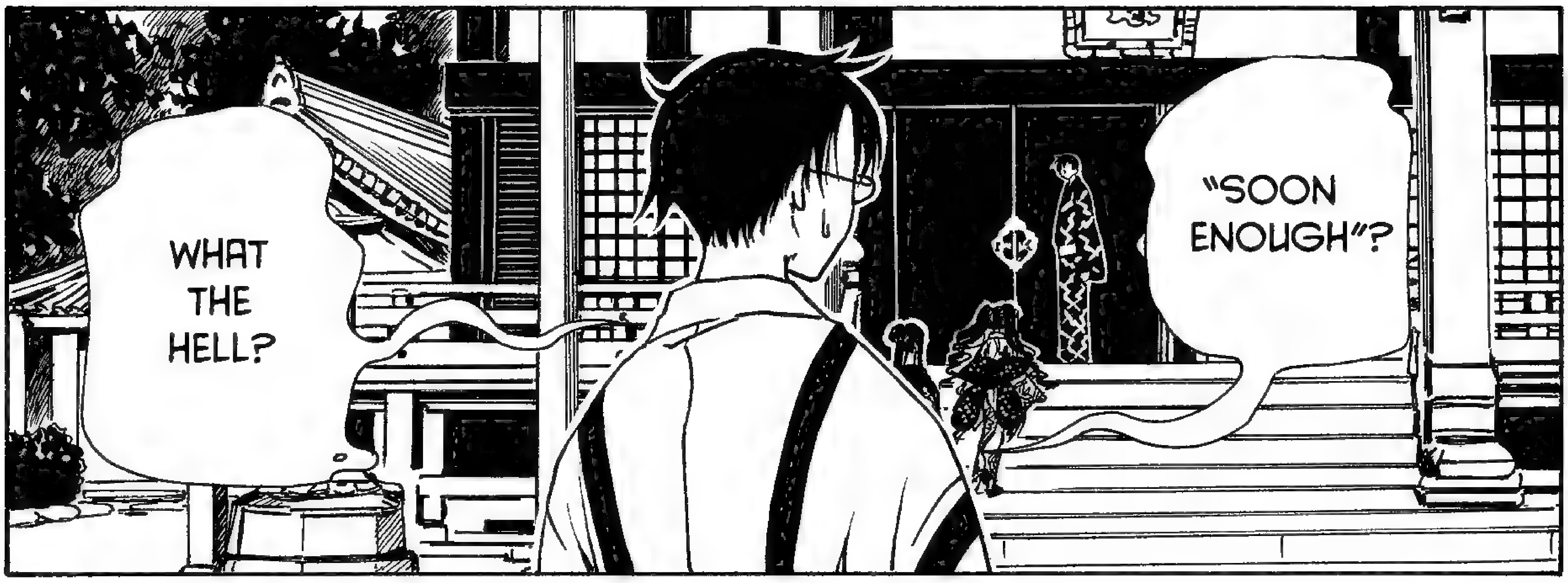

I'D SAY THAT YOU AND DÔMEKI HAVE A DEEP CONNECTION.
カ!
BONNG
いやあ!!
NOOO!
WHY DO I HAVE TO BE CONNECTED TO *HIM?!*
A CONNECTION WITH HIMAWARI-CHAN IS THE ONLY ONE I WANT!
I SAID CONNECTION. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN LOVE.
ね RIGHT?
ね RIGHT?
BUT...
...YOU REMEMBER WHAT SHE SAID TO YOU.
"THERE'S A FRIEND OF YOURS WHO YOU ARE ALWAYS GETTING INTO FIGHTS WITH.
YOU'LL FIND YOURSELVES THROWN TOGETHER MORE AND MORE IN THE FUTURE."

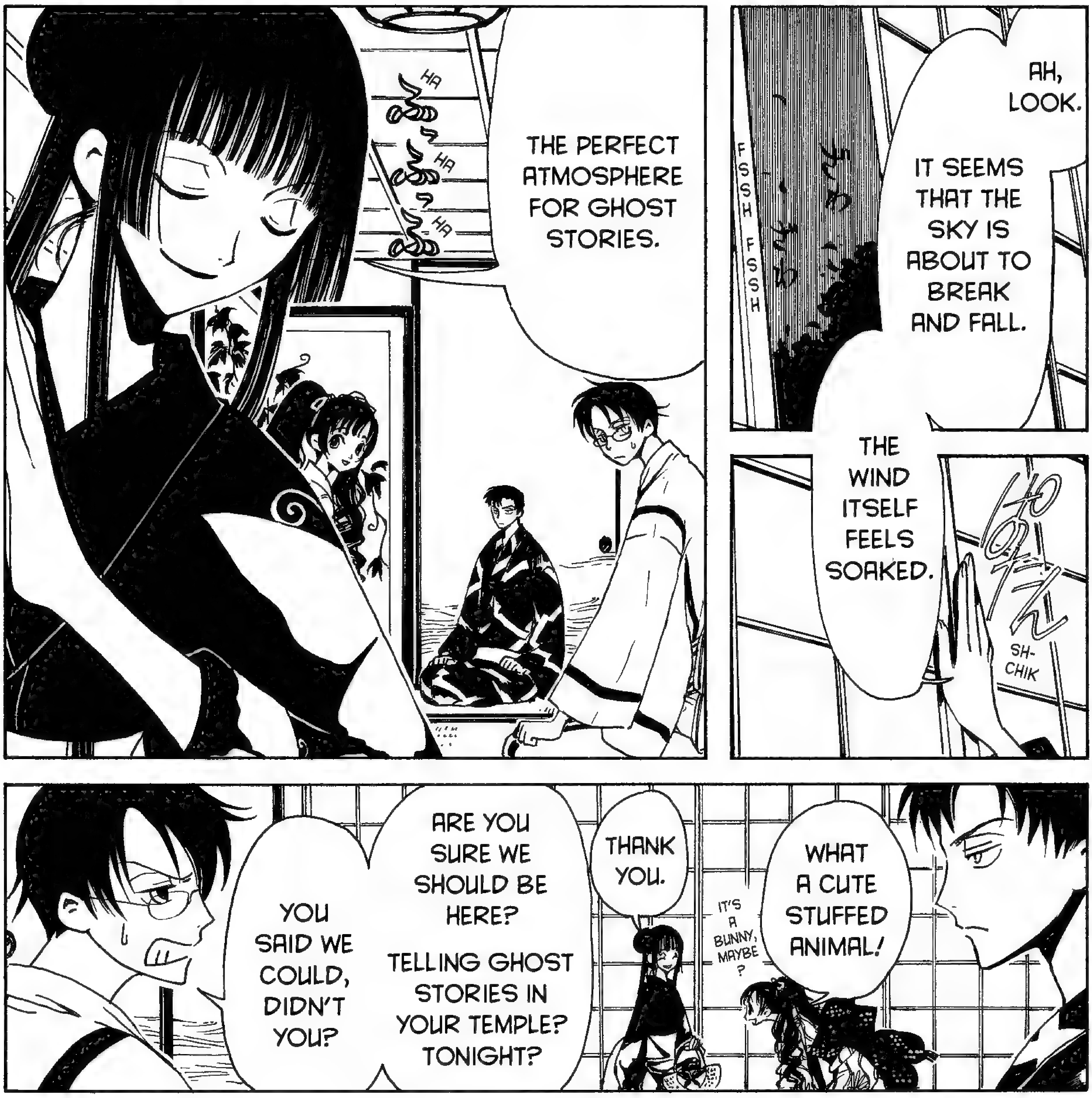

IF ONLY I DIDN'T HAVE TO BE CONNECTED TO *HIM!!*
GLNCH
OKAY.
AH?
BUT...
AAH?

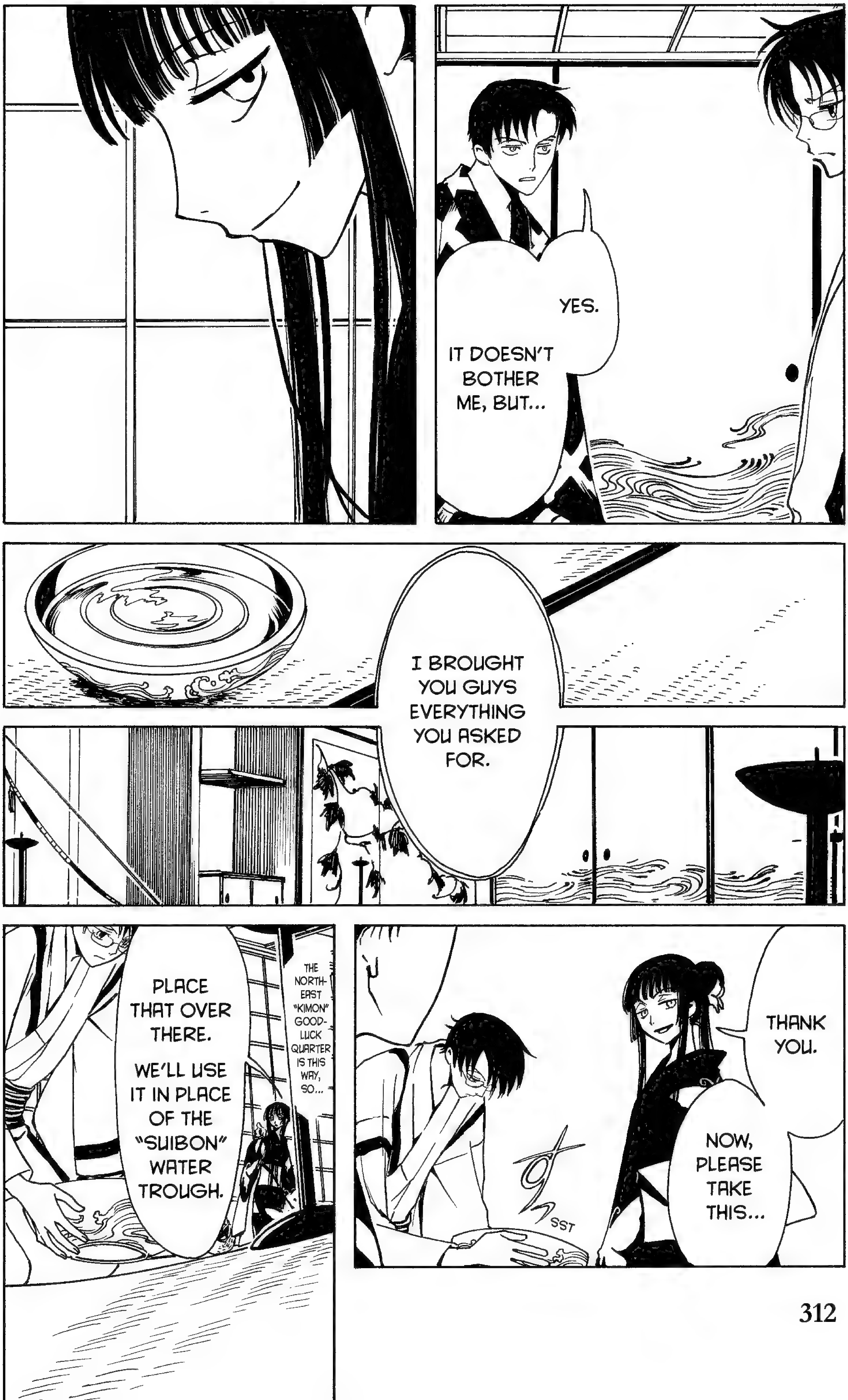

カラコロカラコロ
NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M HIMAWARI KUNOKI.
YÛKO ICHIHARA. JUST CALL ME YÛKO.
WATANUKI-KUN! THE STORE OWNER FOR THE PLACE THAT YOU WORK IS REALLY PRETTY!
カラコロ
KLAK KLAK
AH HA HA HA HA.
MAYBE, BUT SHE'S THE MOST SELFISH WOMAN YOU'VE EVER MET.
にやり
GRIN

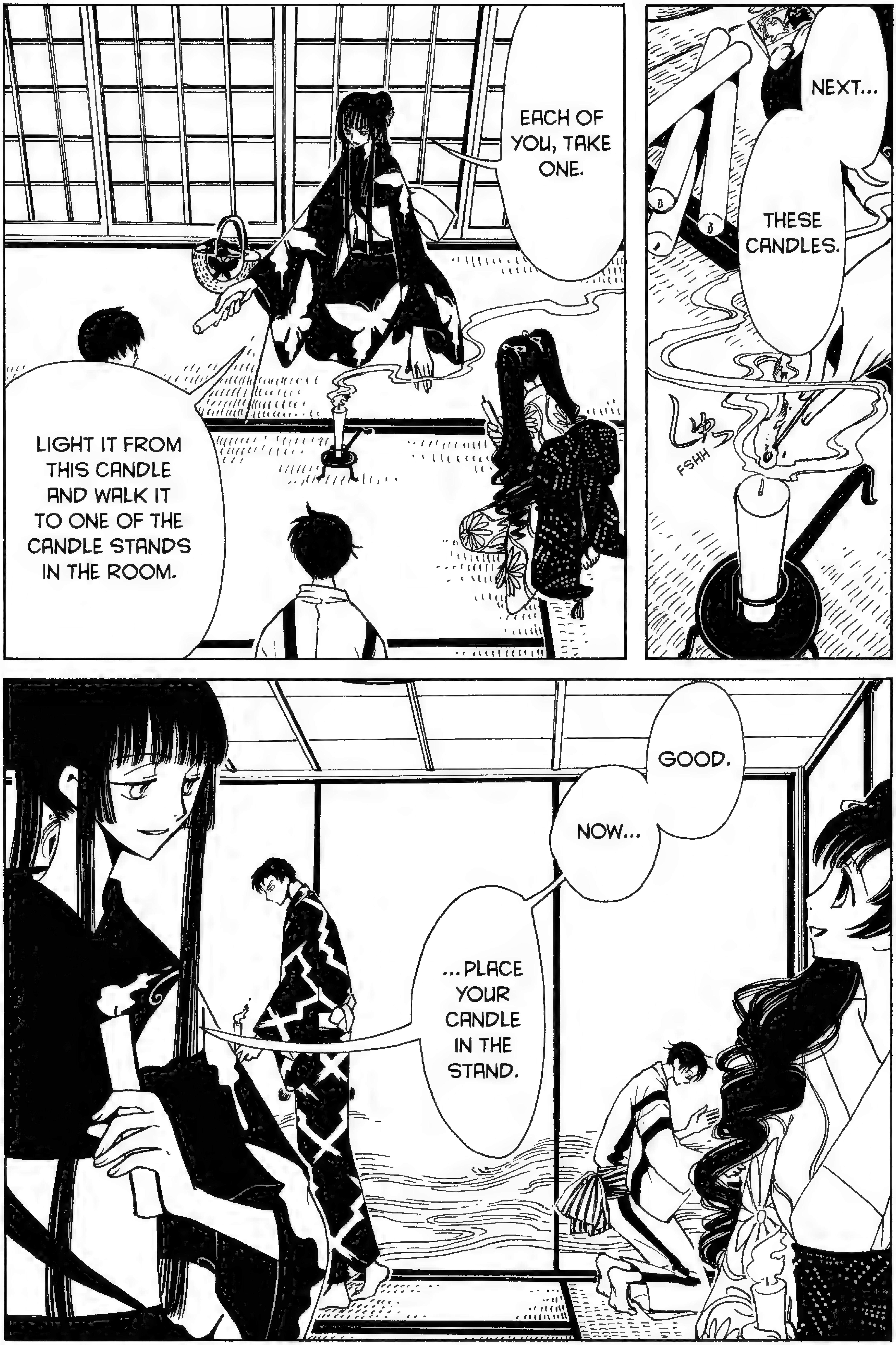

HIMAWARI-CHAN IS VERY CUTE!
ぐいぐい
NUDGE NUDGE
カラコロ
KLAK KLAK
SHE LOOKS VERY NICE IN A YUKATA, DOESN'T SHE?
MAYBE "PERFECT" IS MORE THE WORD!
HOW-EVER...
IT'S GOING TO BE DIFFICULT GOING...
...WITH YOUNG HIMAWARI-CHAN.
DON'T I KNOW IT!
SHE'S SO CUTE, THERE ARE GOING TO BE GUYS FALLING ALL OVER HER!
SIGH
THAT WASN'T WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

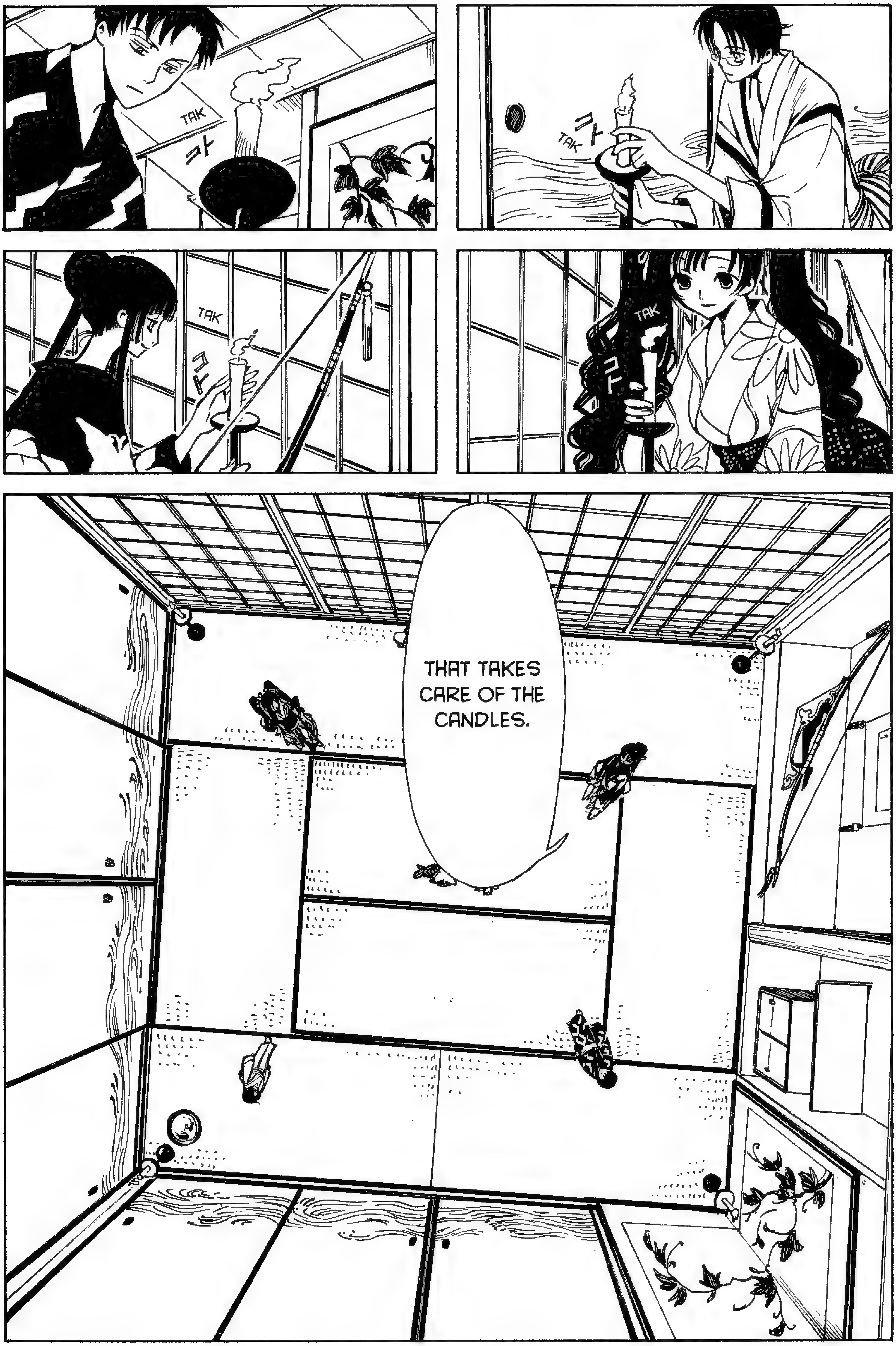

YO.
NOD
うす。
GOOD EVENING!
I GET IT.
WATANUKI, YOU SHOULD TRY TO BE GOOD FRIENDS WITH DÔMEKI-KUN.
SHMP
NO! NOT THAT!
I MEAN, WHY ?!
LET'S GO ON IN.
さ、入りましょ
WELL...
YOU'LL SEE SOON ENOUGH.
YES!
おう!
MOKONA IS GOING INTO STUFFED ANIMAL MODE!
モコナ ぬいぐるみのふりしてるぞ!

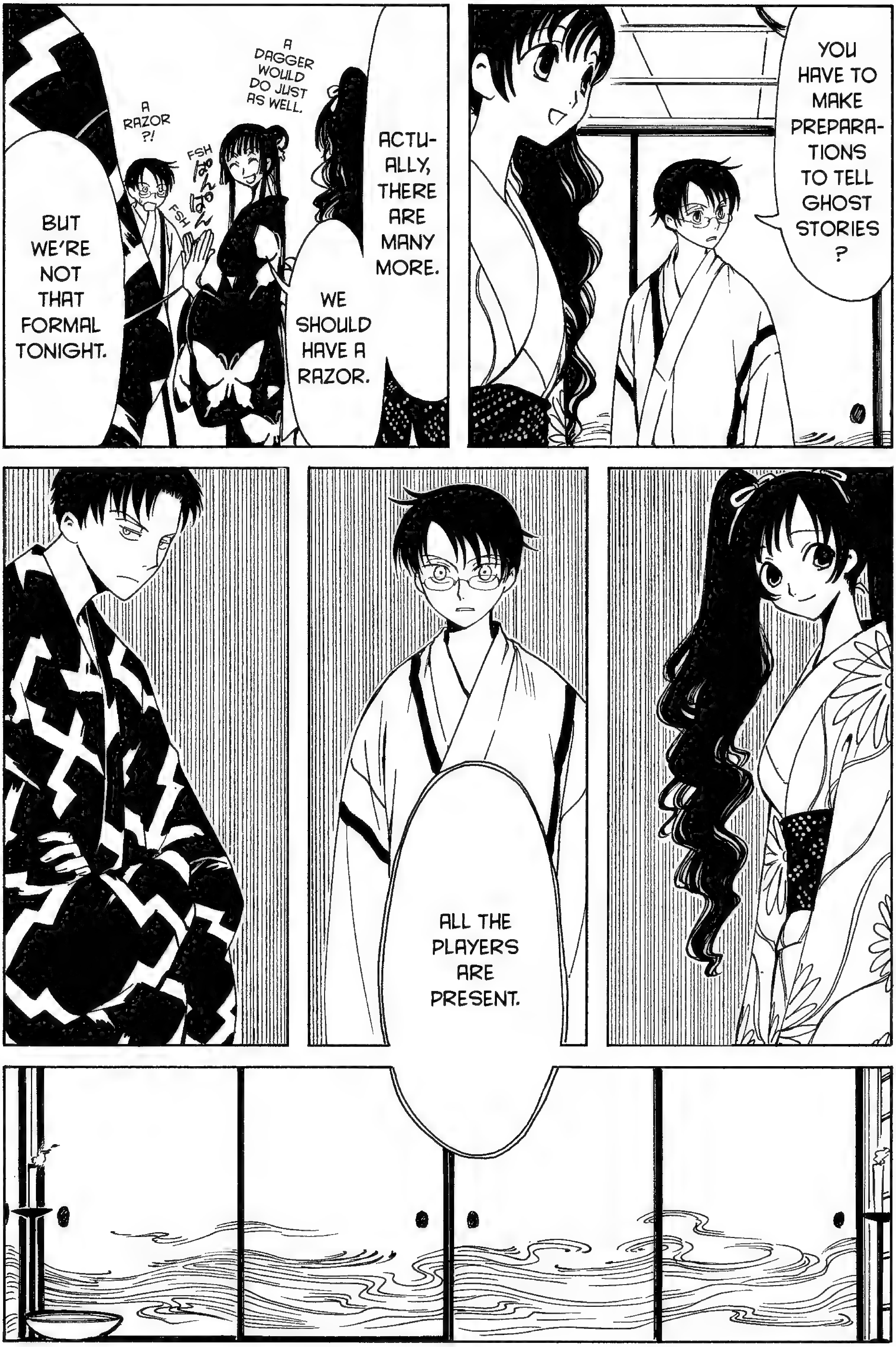

"SOON ENOUGH"?
WHAT THE HELL?

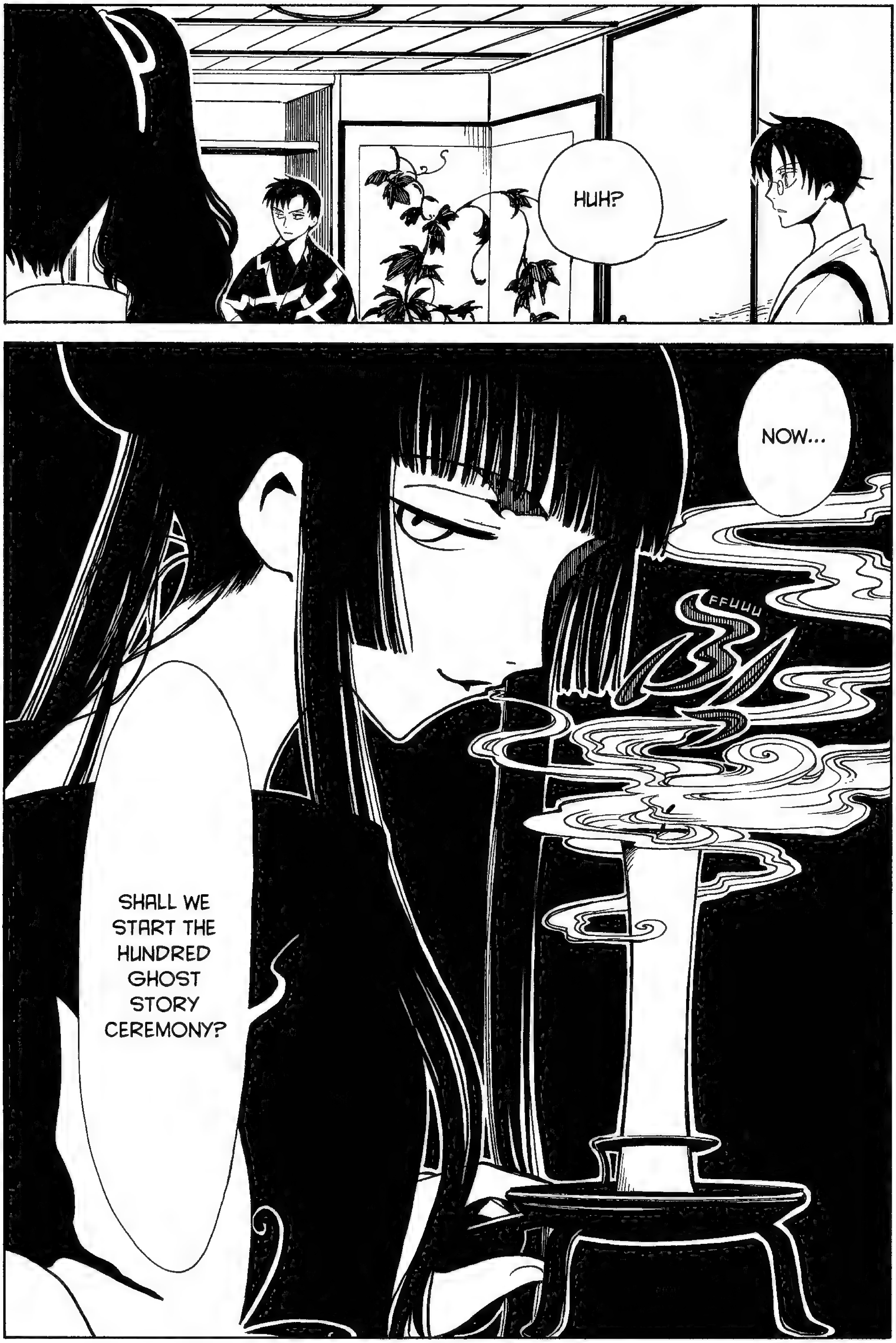

AH, LOOK.
IT SEEMS THAT THE SKY IS ABOUT TO BREAK AND FALL.
FSSH FSSH
THE WIND ITSELF FEELS SOAKED.
SH-CHIK
THE PERFECT ATMOSPHERE FOR GHOST STORIES.
HA HA HA
WHAT A CUTE STUFFED ANIMAL!
IT'S A BUNNY, MAYBE?
THANK YOU.
ARE YOU SURE WE SHOULD BE HERE?
TELLING GHOST STORIES IN YOUR TEMPLE? TONIGHT?
YOU SAID WE COULD, DIDN'T YOU?


YES.
IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME, BUT...
I BROUGHT YOU GUYS EVERYTHING YOU ASKED FOR.
THANK YOU.
NOW, PLEASE TAKE THIS...
SST
PLACE THAT OVER THERE. WE'LL USE IT IN PLACE OF THE "SUIBON" WATER TROUGH.
THE NORTH-EAST "KIMON" GOOD-LUCK QUARTER IS THIS WAY, SO...

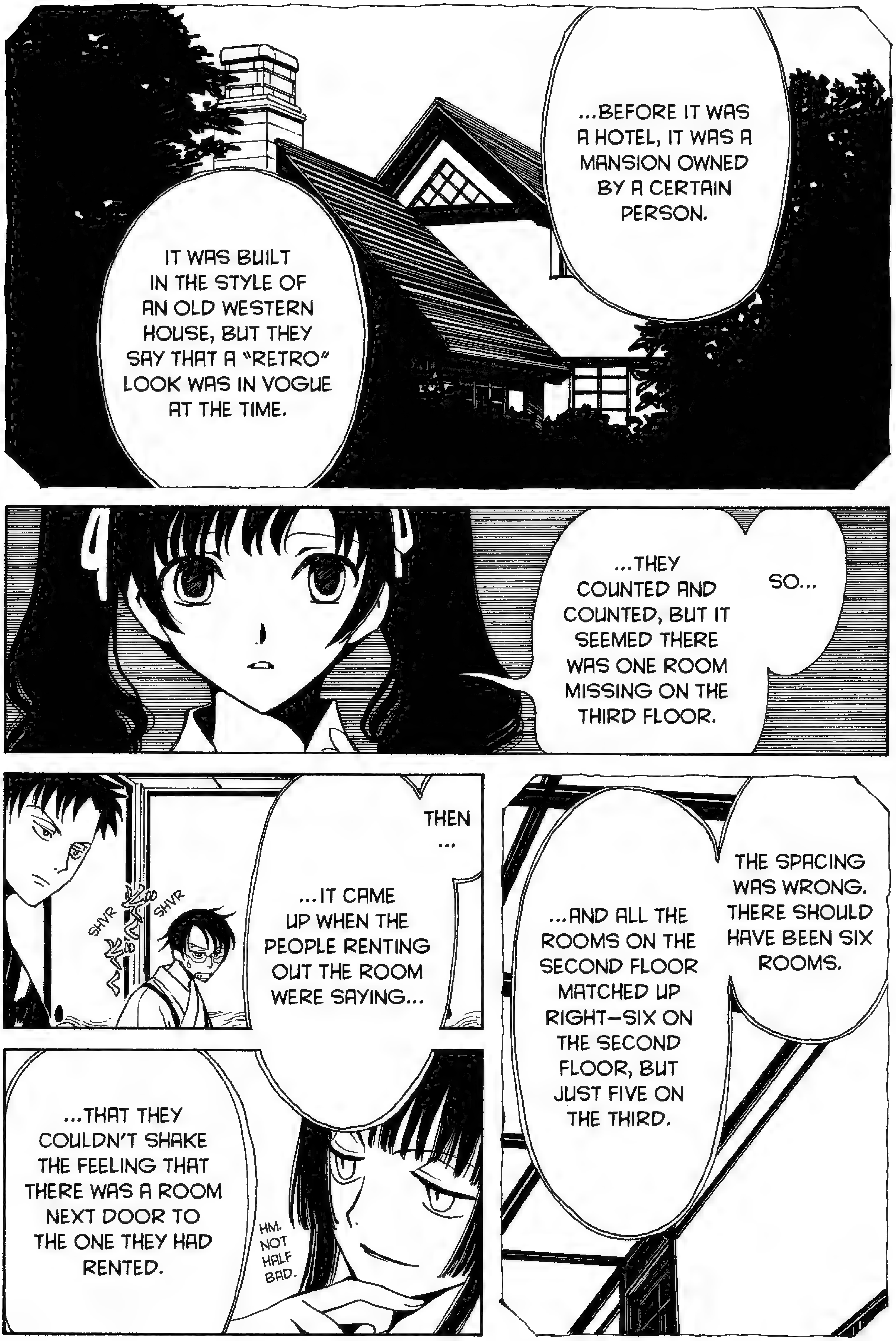

NEXT...
THESE CANDLES.
しゅっ
FSHH
EACH OF YOU, TAKE ONE.
LIGHT IT FROM THIS CANDLE AND WALK IT TO ONE OF THE CANDLE STANDS IN THE ROOM.
GOOD.
NOW...
...PLACE YOUR CANDLE IN THE STAND.

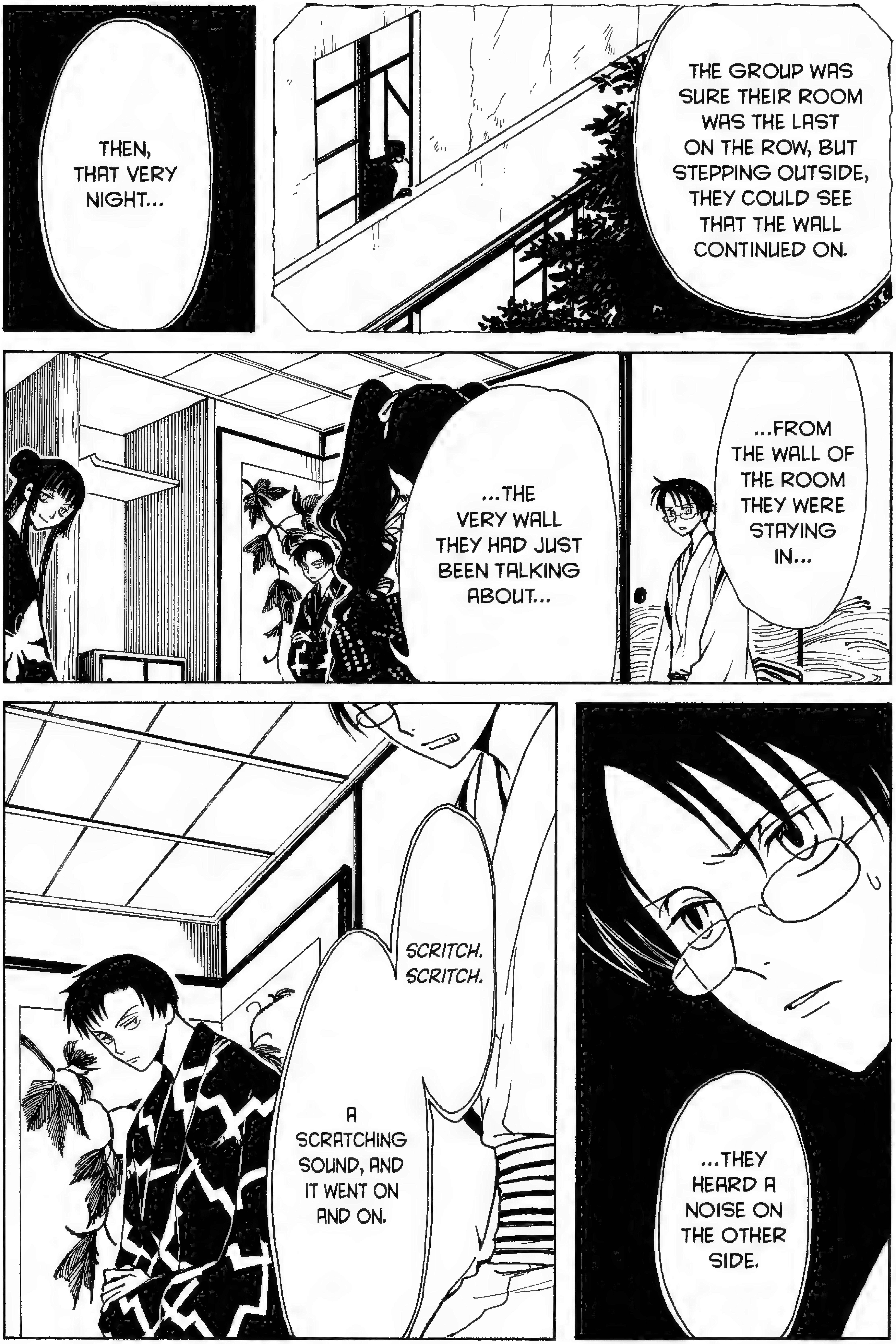

TAK
コト
TAK
コト
TAK
コト
TAK
コト
THAT TAKES CARE OF THE CANDLES.

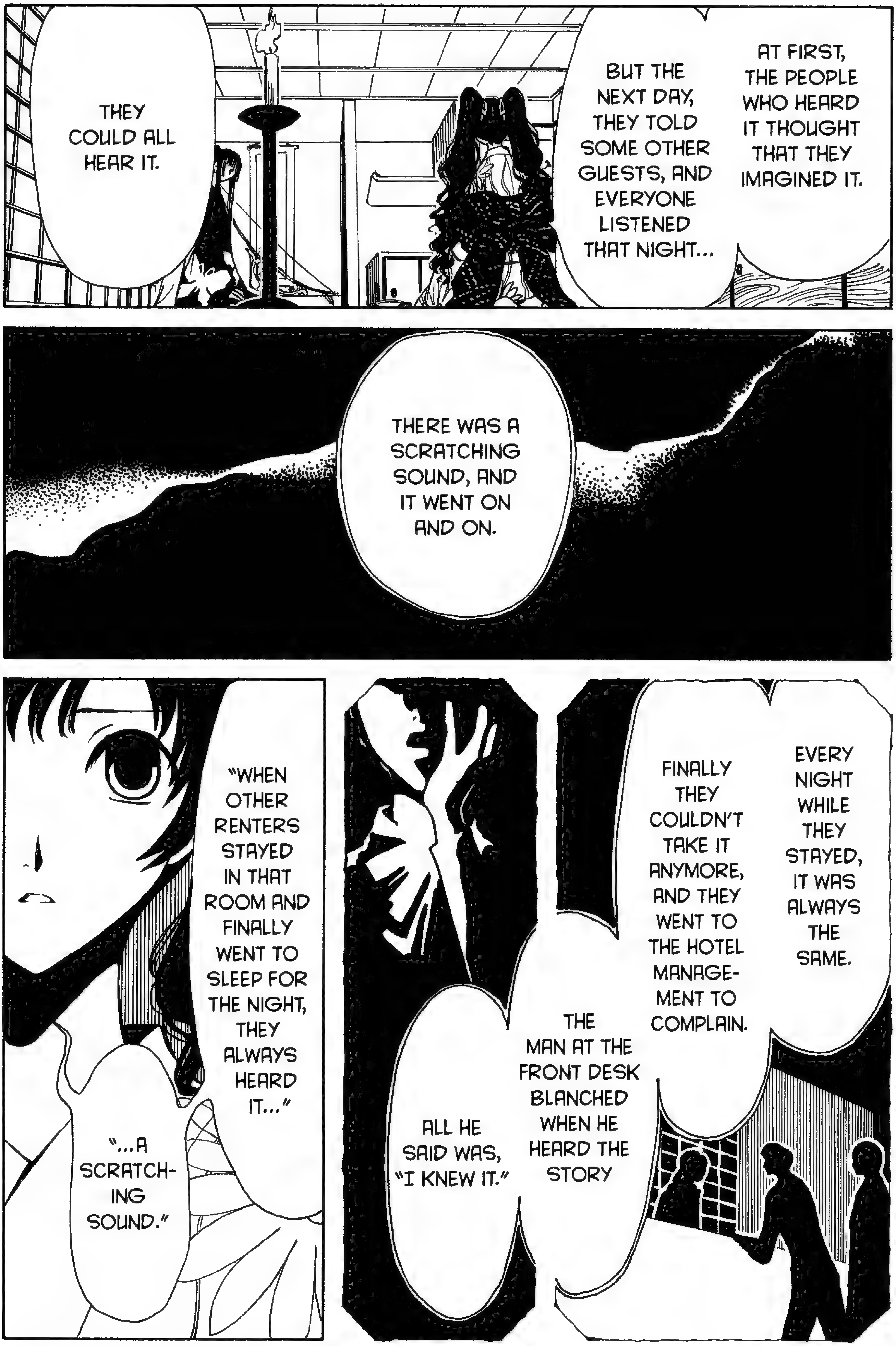

YOU HAVE TO MAKE PREPARATIONS TO TELL GHOST STORIES?
ACTUALLY, THERE ARE MANY MORE.
WE SHOULD HAVE A RAZOR.
A DAGGER WOULD DO JUST AS WELL.
A RAZOR?!
FSH ぱんぽん FSH
BUT WE'RE NOT THAT FORMAL TONIGHT.
ALL THE PLAYERS ARE PRESENT.

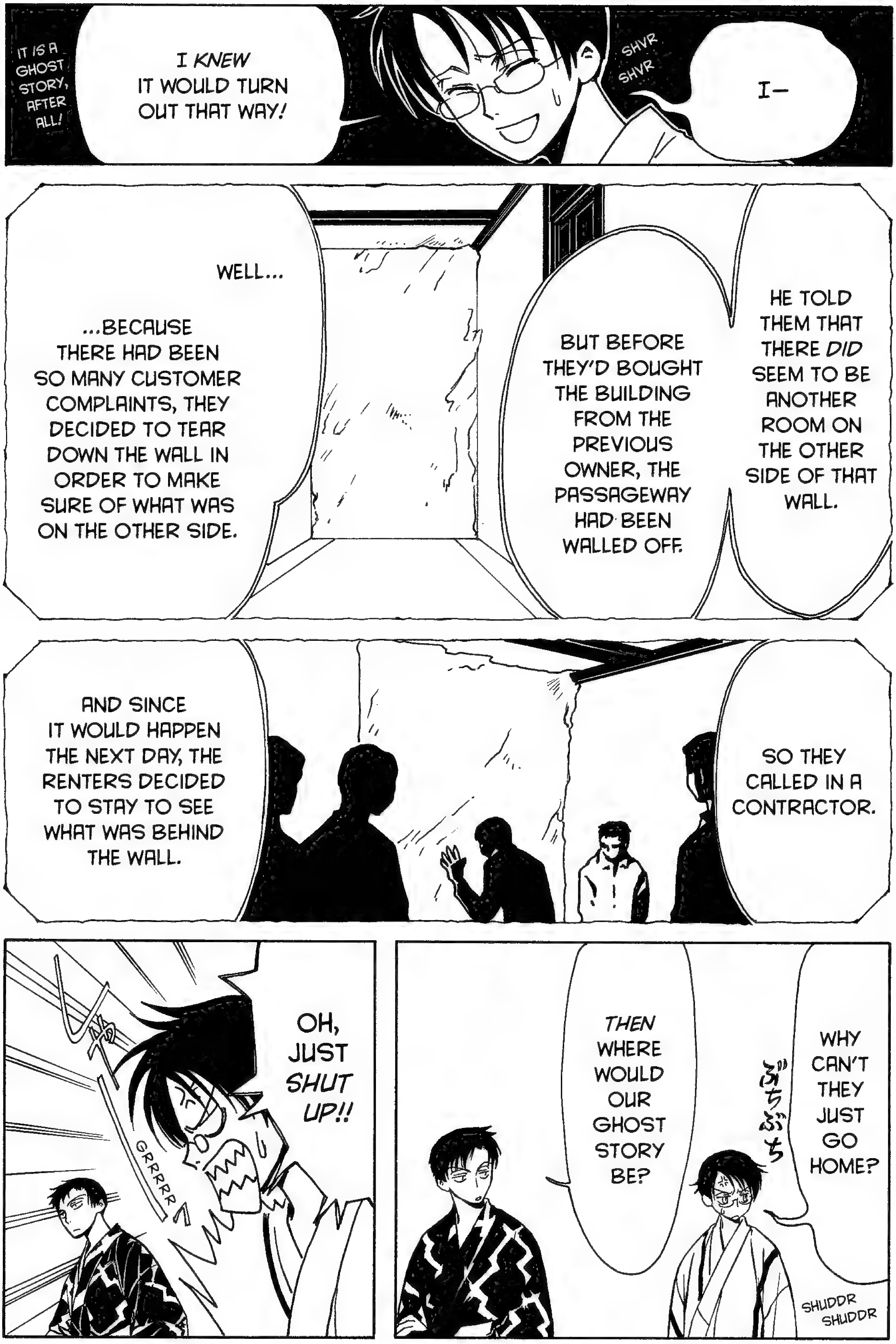

HUH?
NOW...
FFUUU
SHALL WE START THE HUNDRED GHOST STORY CEREMONY?

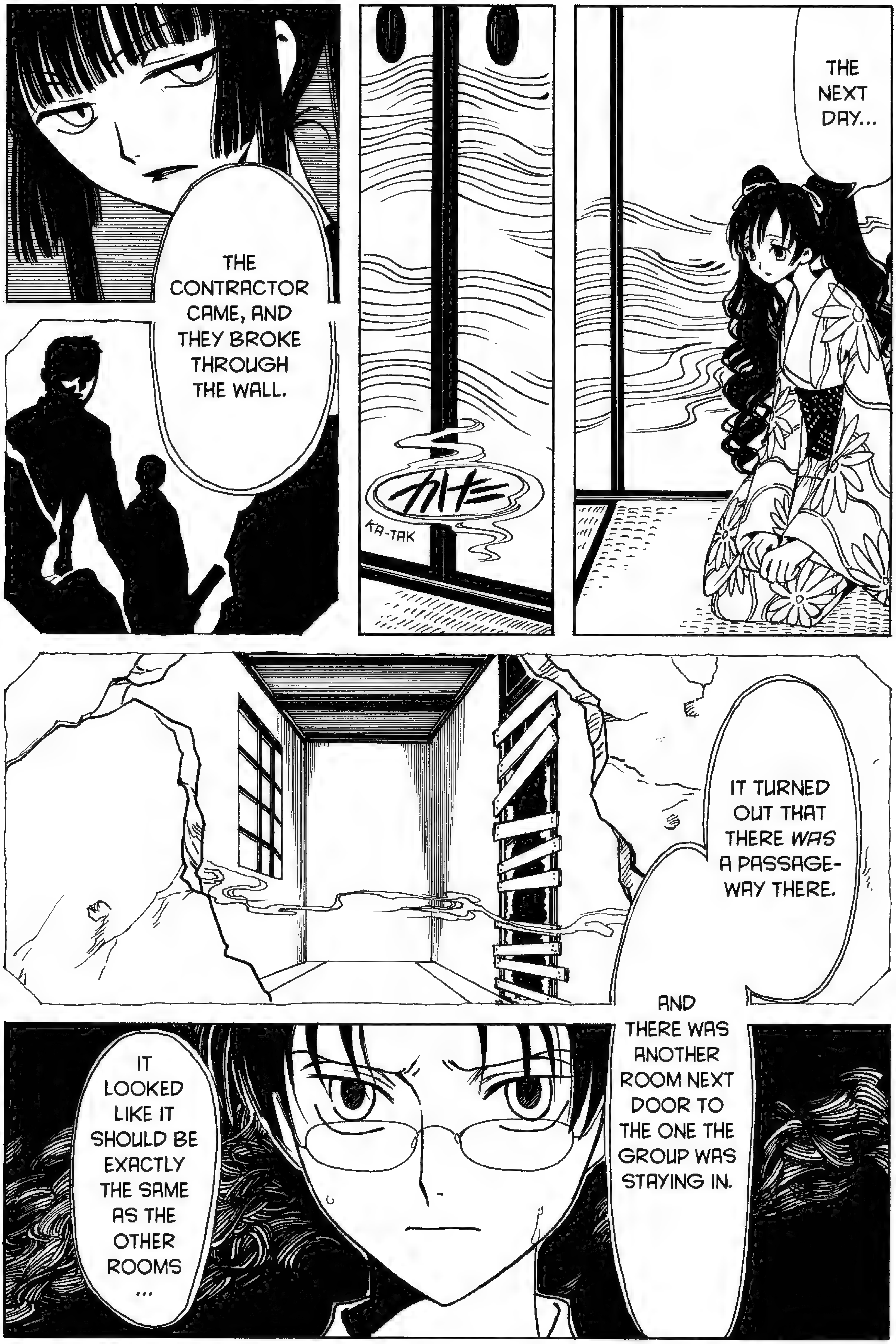
xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

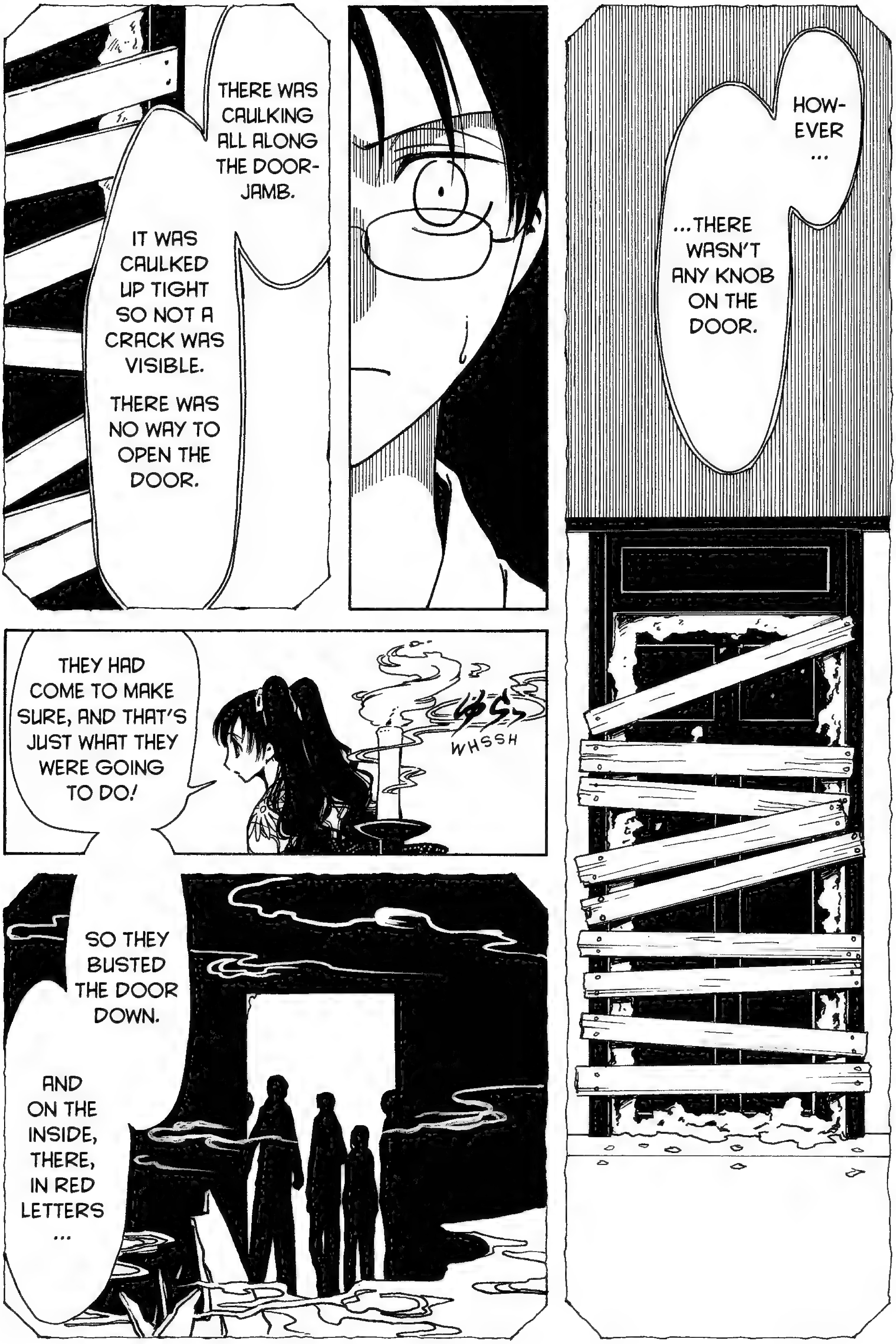

...BEFORE IT WAS A HOTEL, IT WAS A MANSION OWNED BY A CERTAIN PERSON.
IT WAS BUILT IN THE STYLE OF AN OLD WESTERN HOUSE, BUT THEY SAY THAT A "RETRO" LOOK WAS IN VOGUE AT THE TIME.
SO...
...THEY COUNTED AND COUNTED, BUT IT SEEMED THERE WAS ONE ROOM MISSING ON THE THIRD FLOOR.
THE SPACING WAS WRONG. THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SIX ROOMS.
...AND ALL THE ROOMS ON THE SECOND FLOOR MATCHED UP RIGHT—SIX ON THE SECOND FLOOR, BUT JUST FIVE ON THE THIRD.
THEN...
...IT CAME UP WHEN THE PEOPLE RENTING OUT THE ROOM WERE SAYING...
SHVR SHVR
...THAT THEY COULDN'T SHAKE THE FEELING THAT THERE WAS A ROOM NEXT DOOR TO THE ONE THEY HAD RENTED.
HM. NOT HALF BAD.

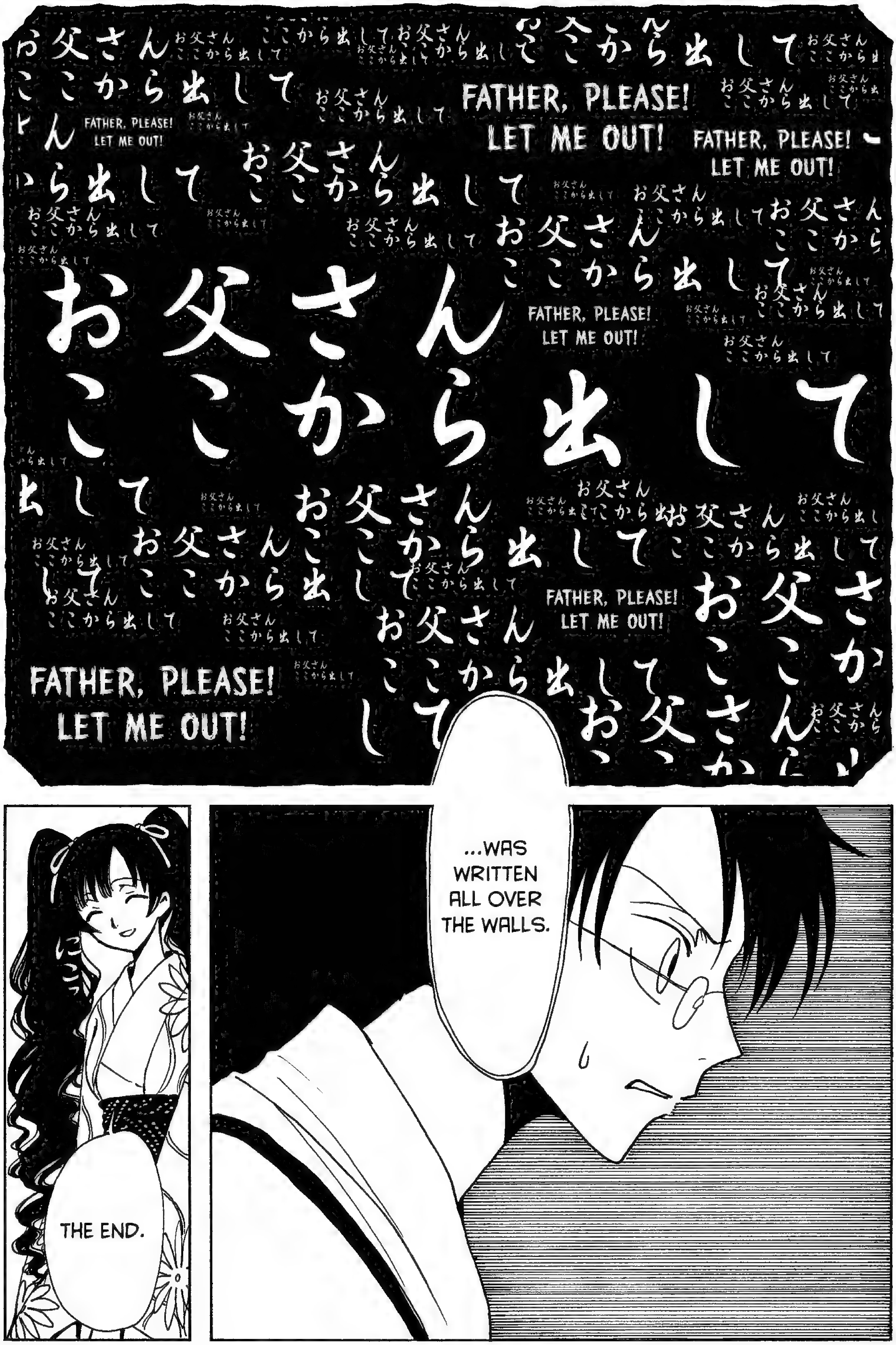

THE GROUP WAS SURE THEIR ROOM WAS THE LAST ON THE ROW, BUT STEPPING OUTSIDE, THEY COULD SEE THAT THE WALL CONTINUED ON.
THEN, THAT VERY NIGHT...
...FROM THE WALL OF THE ROOM THEY WERE STAYING IN...
...THE VERY WALL THEY HAD JUST BEEN TALKING ABOUT...
...THEY HEARD A NOISE ON THE OTHER SIDE.
SCRITCH. SCRITCH.
A SCRATCHING SOUND, AND IT WENT ON AND ON.

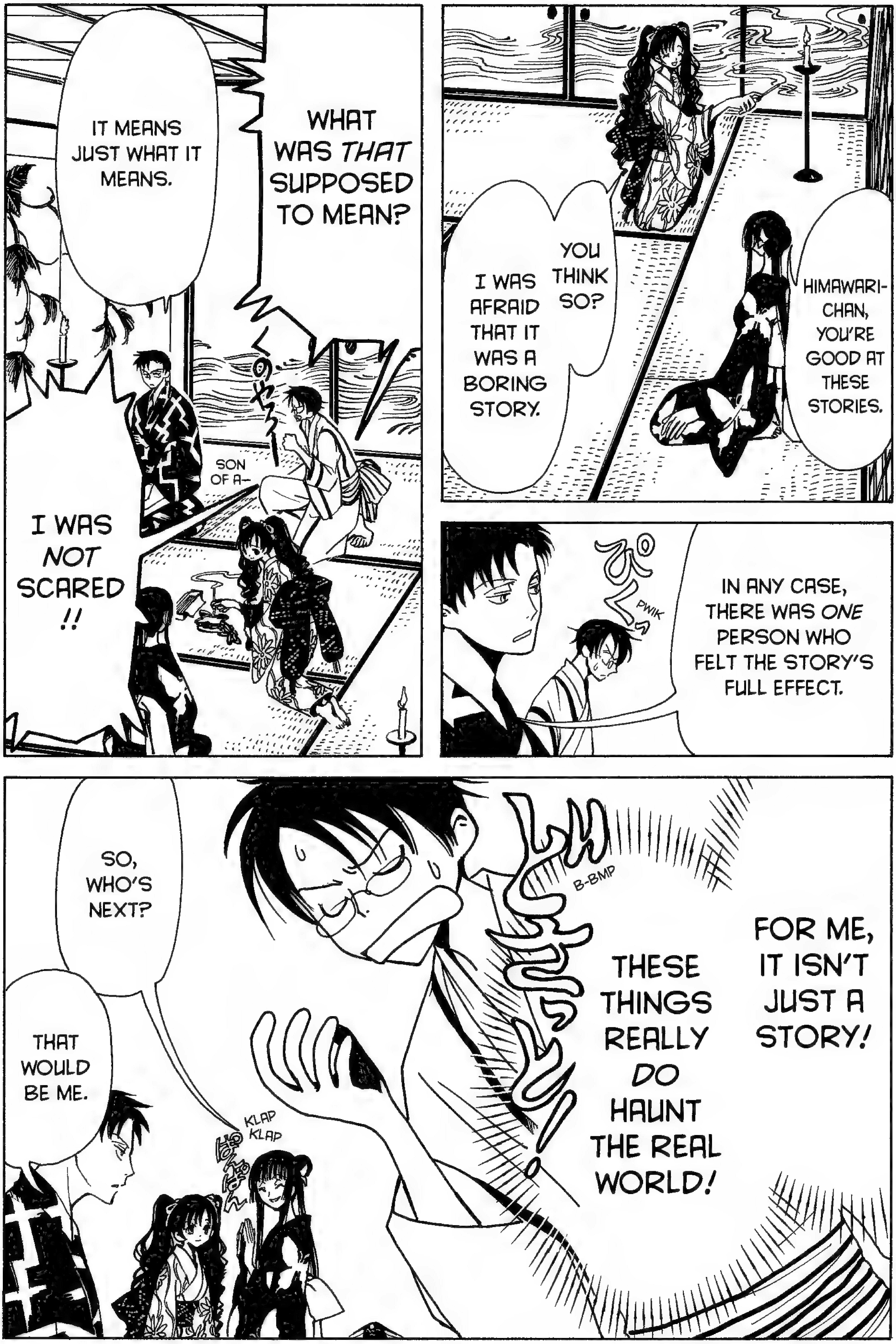

AT FIRST, THE PEOPLE WHO HEARD IT THOUGHT THAT THEY IMAGINED IT.
BUT THE NEXT DAY, THEY TOLD SOME OTHER GUESTS, AND EVERYONE LISTENED THAT NIGHT...
THEY COULD ALL HEAR IT.
THERE WAS A SCRATCHING SOUND, AND IT WENT ON AND ON.
EVERY NIGHT WHILE THEY STAYED, IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.
FINALLY THEY COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE, AND THEY WENT TO THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT TO COMPLAIN.
THE MAN AT THE FRONT DESK BLANCHED WHEN HE HEARD THE STORY
ALL HE SAID WAS, "I KNEW IT."
"WHEN OTHER RENTERS STAYED IN THAT ROOM AND FINALLY WENT TO SLEEP FOR THE NIGHT, THEY ALWAYS HEARD IT..."
"...A SCRATCHING SOUND."

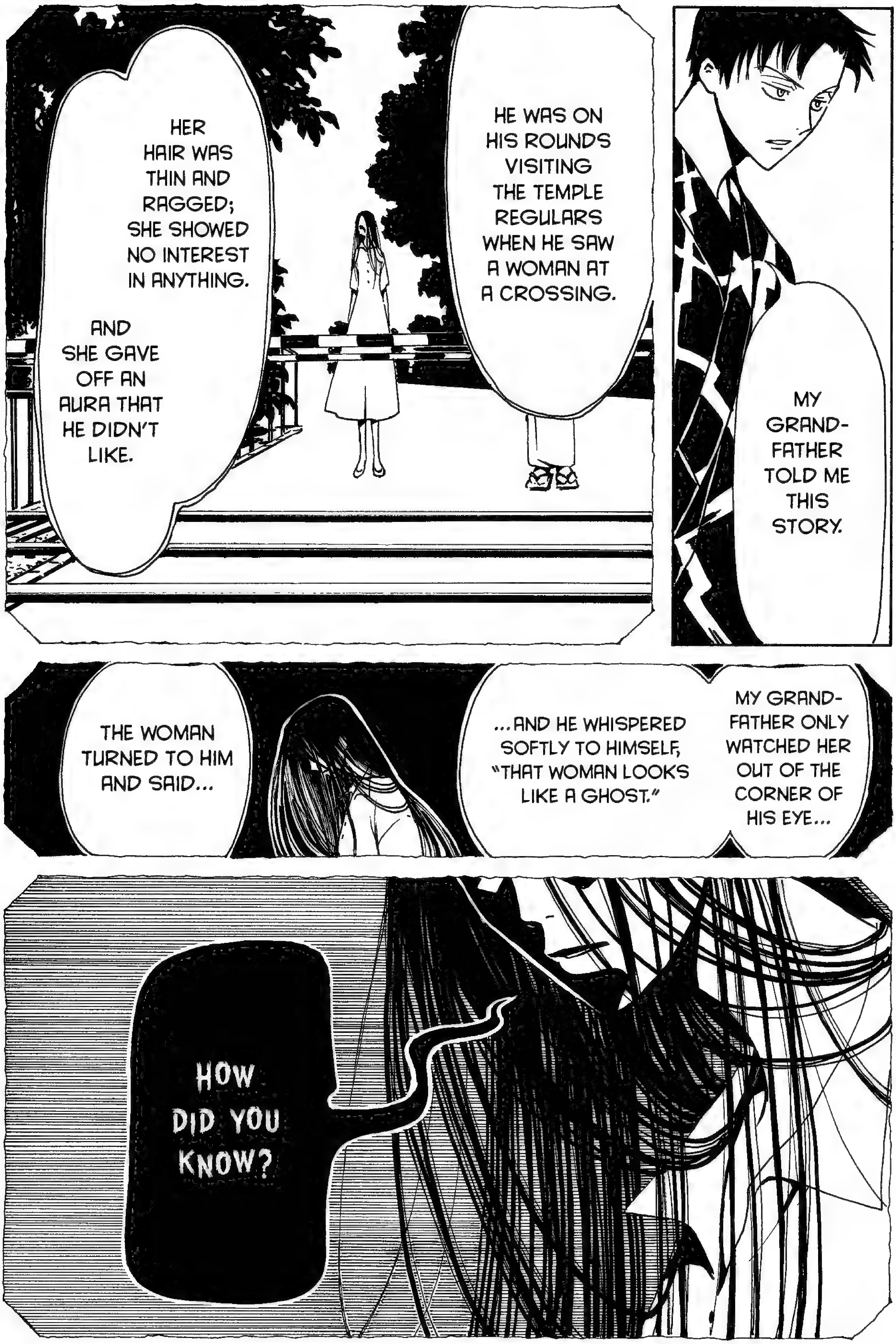

I—
SHVR SHVR
I *KNEW* IT WOULD TURN OUT THAT WAY!
IT IS A GHOST STORY, AFTER ALL!
HE TOLD THEM THAT THERE *DID* SEEM TO BE ANOTHER ROOM ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT WALL.
BUT BEFORE THEY'D BOUGHT THE BUILDING FROM THE PREVIOUS OWNER, THE PASSAGEWAY HAD BEEN WALLED OFF.
WELL...
...BECAUSE THERE HAD BEEN SO MANY CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS, THEY DECIDED TO TEAR DOWN THE WALL IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE OF WHAT WAS ON THE OTHER SIDE.
SO THEY CALLED IN A CONTRACTOR.
AND SINCE IT WOULD HAPPEN THE NEXT DAY, THE RENTERS DECIDED TO STAY TO SEE WHAT WAS BEHIND THE WALL.
WHY CAN'T THEY JUST GO HOME?
ぶちぶち
SHUDDR SHUDDR
THEN WHERE WOULD OUR GHOST STORY BE?
OH, JUST *SHUT UP!!*
GRRRRR

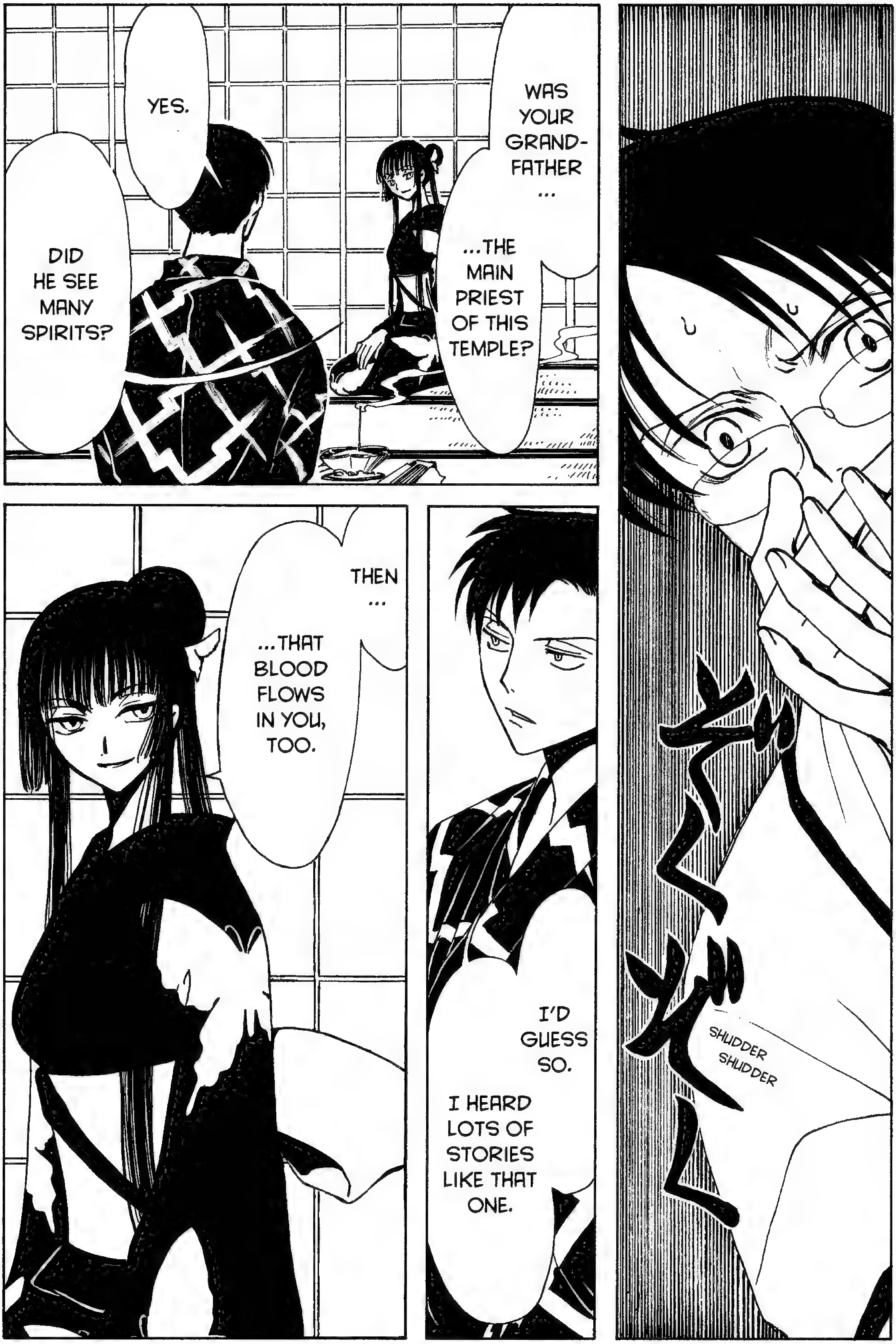

THE NEXT DAY...
KA-TAK
THE CONTRACTOR CAME, AND THEY BROKE THROUGH THE WALL.
IT TURNED OUT THAT THERE *WAS* A PASSAGEWAY THERE.
AND THERE WAS ANOTHER ROOM NEXT DOOR TO THE ONE THE GROUP WAS STAYING IN.
IT LOOKED LIKE IT SHOULD BE EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE OTHER ROOMS...

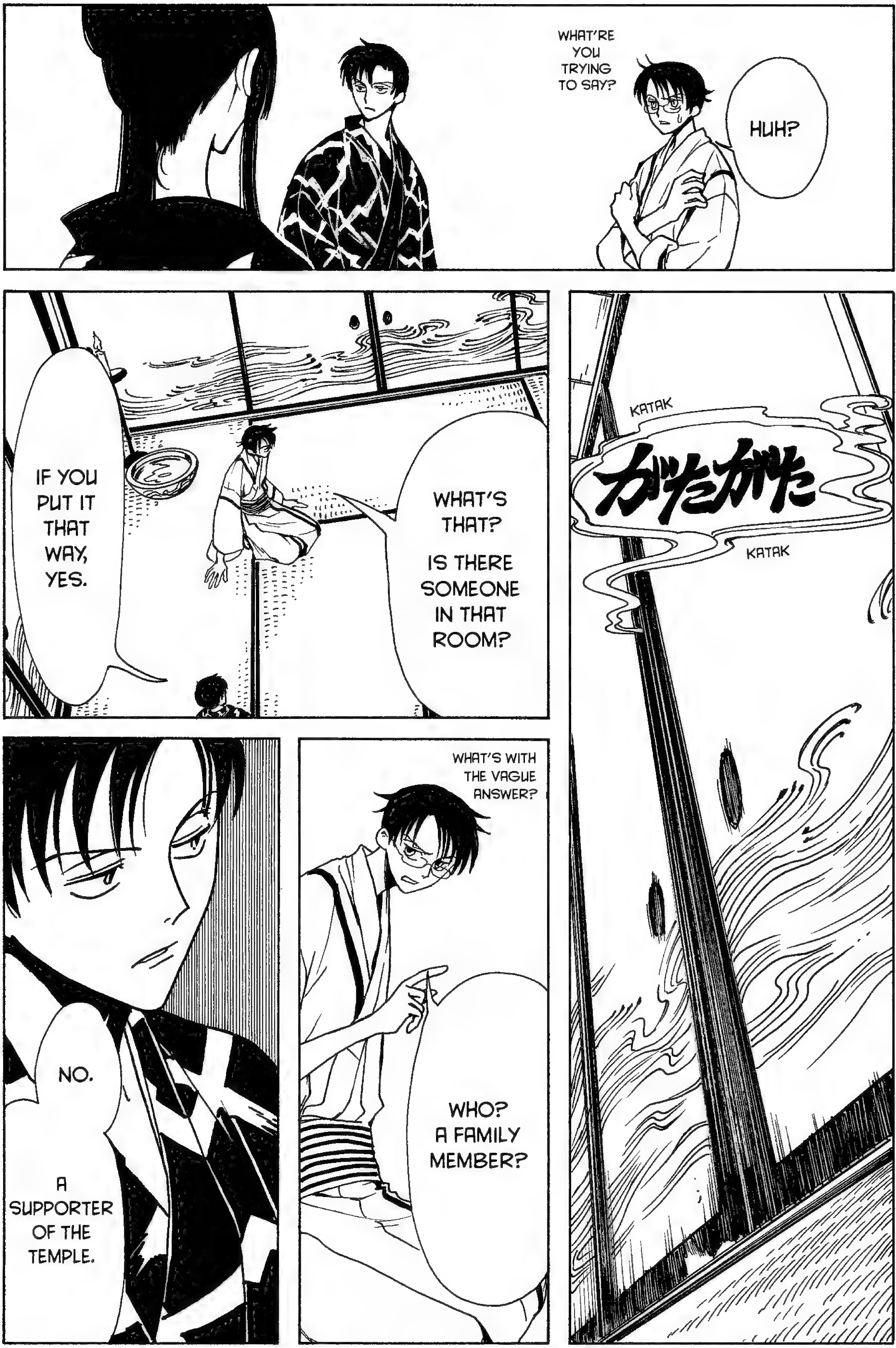

HOWEVER...
...THERE WASN'T ANY KNOB ON THE DOOR.
THERE WAS CAULKING ALL ALONG THE DOORJAMB.
IT WAS CAULKED UP TIGHT SO NOT A CRACK WAS VISIBLE.
THERE WAS NO WAY TO OPEN THE DOOR.
ゆら
WHSSH
THEY HAD COME TO MAKE SURE, AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO DO!
SO THEY BUSTED THE DOOR DOWN.
AND ON THE INSIDE, THERE, IN RED LETTERS...

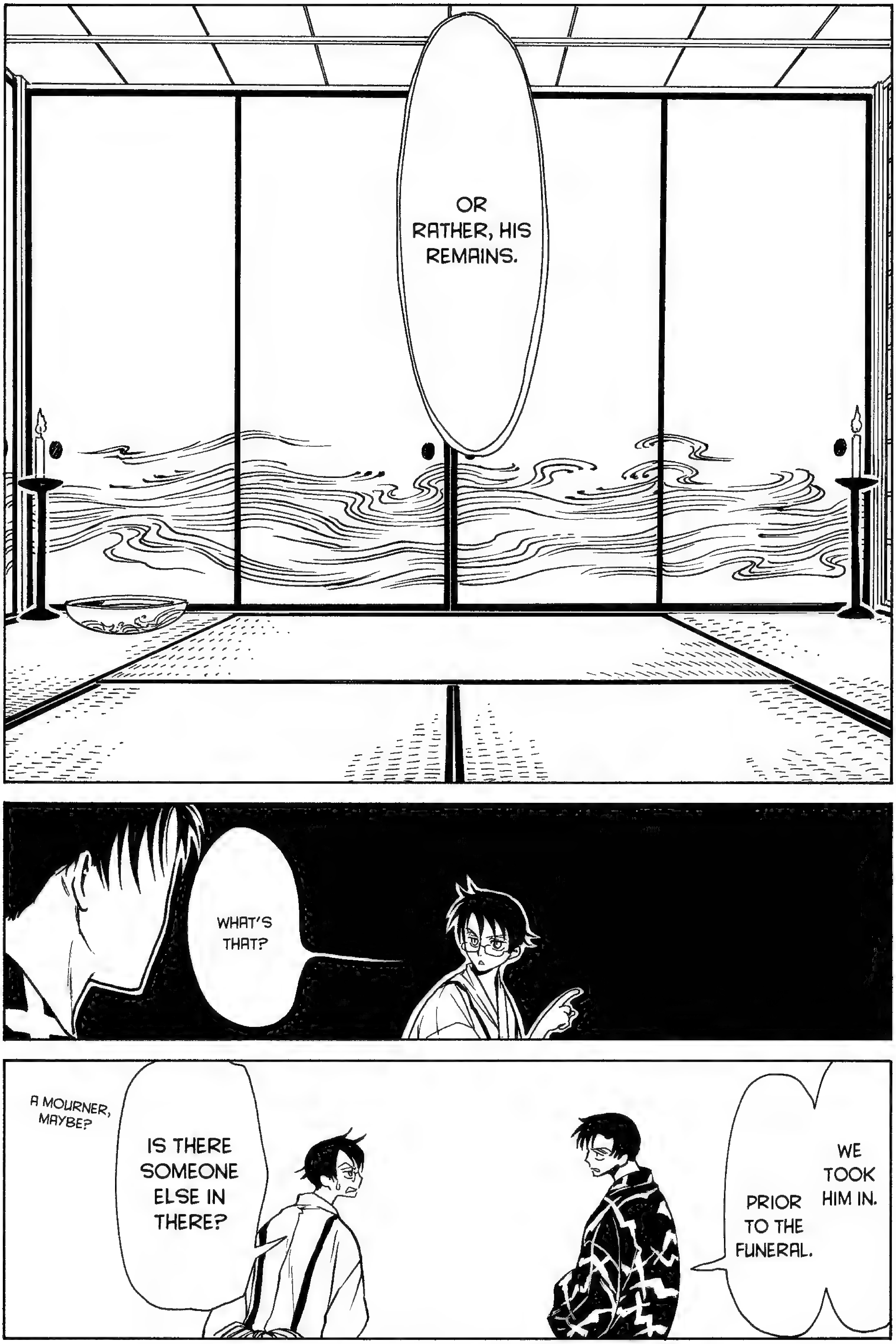

お父さん ここから出して
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
FATHER, PLEASE! LET ME OUT!
...WAS WRITTEN ALL OVER THE WALLS.
にこっ
THE END.

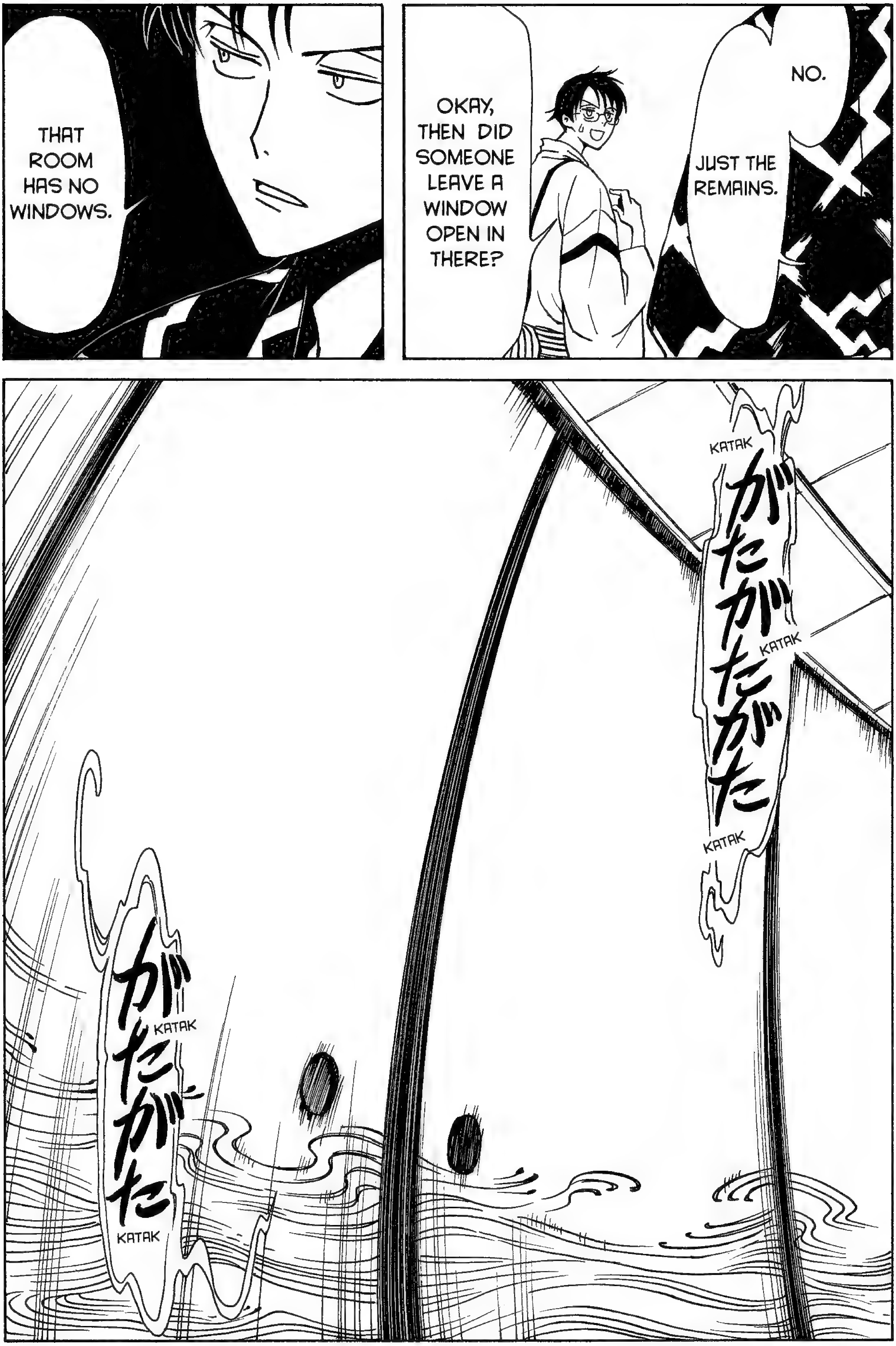

HIMAWARI-CHAN, YOU'RE GOOD AT THESE STORIES.
YOU THINK SO?
I WAS AFRAID THAT IT WAS A BORING STORY.
IN ANY CASE, THERE WAS *ONE* PERSON WHO FELT THE STORY'S FULL EFFECT.
PWIK
WHAT WAS *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
IT MEANS JUST WHAT IT MEANS.
SON OF A—
I WAS *NOT* SCARED!!
FOR ME, IT ISN'T JUST A STORY!
THESE THINGS REALLY *DO* HAUNT THE REAL WORLD!
B-BMP
SO, WHO'S NEXT?
THAT WOULD BE ME.
KLAP KLAP

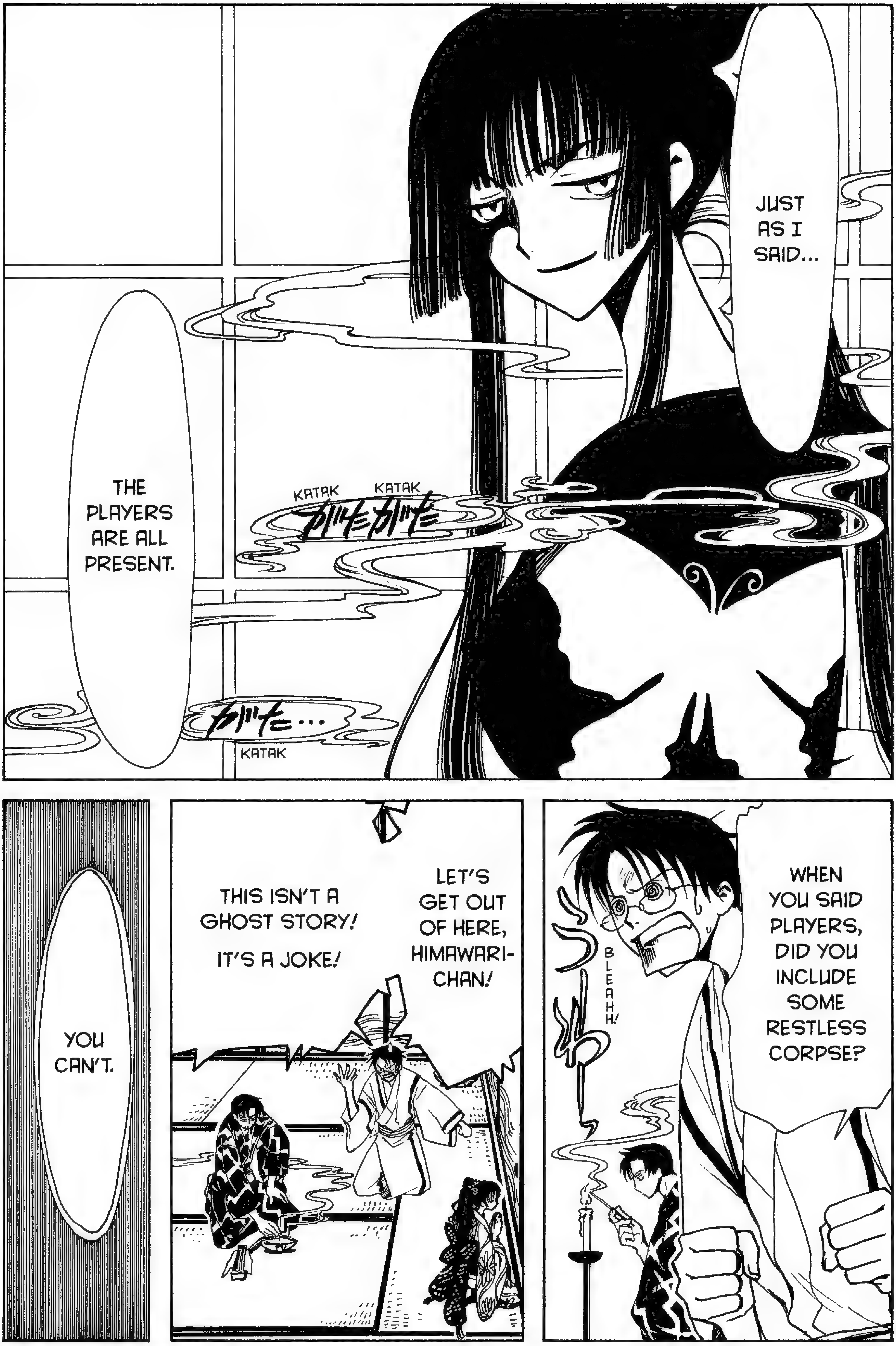

MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME THIS STORY.
HE WAS ON HIS ROUNDS VISITING THE TEMPLE REGULARS WHEN HE SAW A WOMAN AT A CROSSING.
HER HAIR WAS THIN AND RAGGED; SHE SHOWED NO INTEREST IN ANYTHING.
AND SHE GAVE OFF AN AURA THAT HE DIDN'T LIKE.
MY GRANDFATHER ONLY WATCHED HER OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE...
...AND HE WHISPERED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF, "THAT WOMAN LOOKS LIKE A GHOST."
THE WOMAN TURNED TO HIM AND SAID...
HOW DID YOU KNOW?

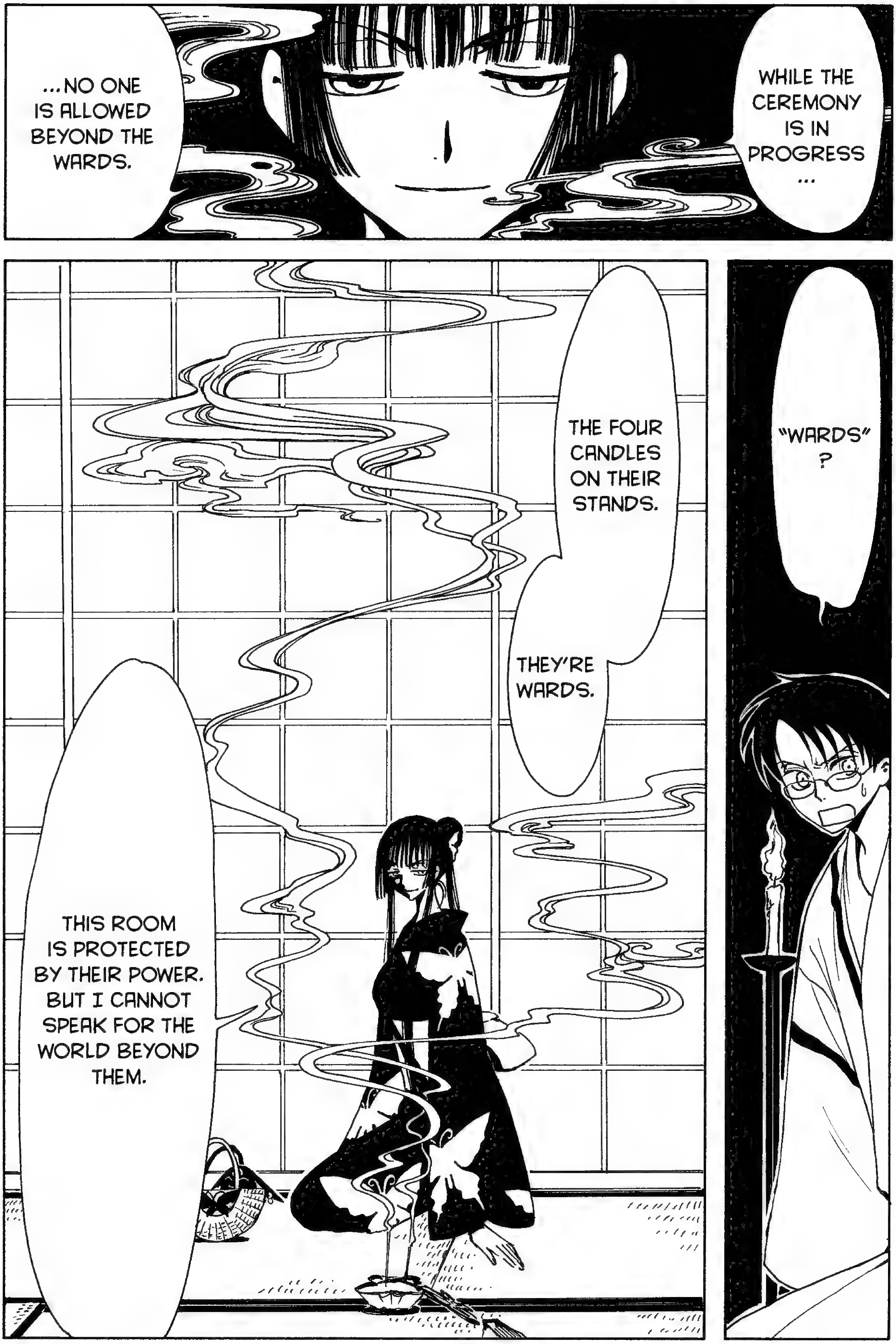

WAS YOUR GRANDFATHER ...
...THE MAIN PRIEST OF THIS TEMPLE?
YES.
DID HE SEE MANY SPIRITS?
I'D GUESS SO.
I HEARD LOTS OF STORIES LIKE THAT ONE.
THEN ...
...THAT BLOOD FLOWS IN YOU, TOO.
SHUDDER SHUDDER

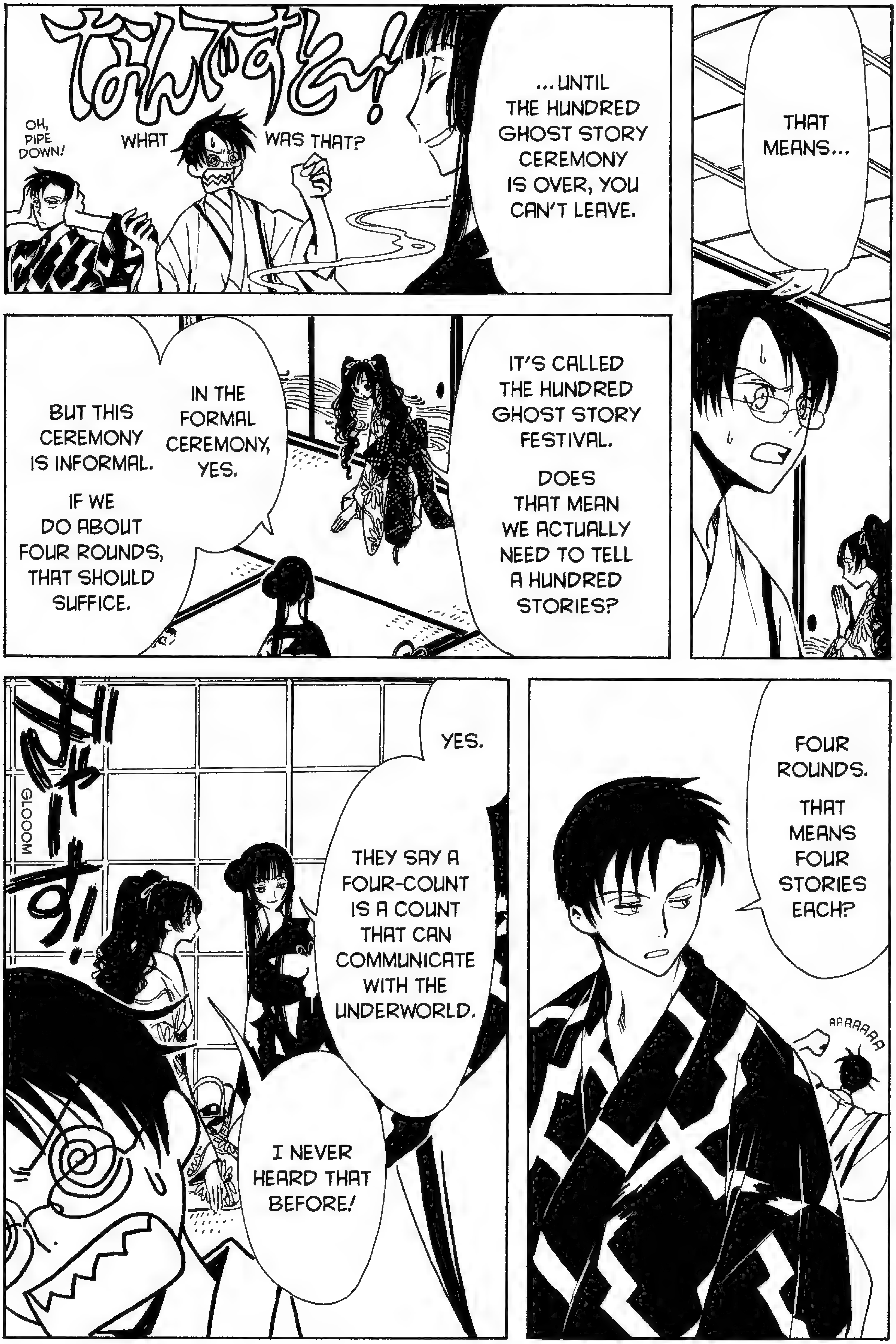

HUH?
WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO SAY?
KATAK
ガたガた
KATAK
WHAT'S THAT? IS THERE SOMEONE IN THAT ROOM?
IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, YES.
WHO? A FAMILY MEMBER?
WHAT'S WITH THE VAGUE ANSWER?
NO.
A SUPPORTER OF THE TEMPLE.

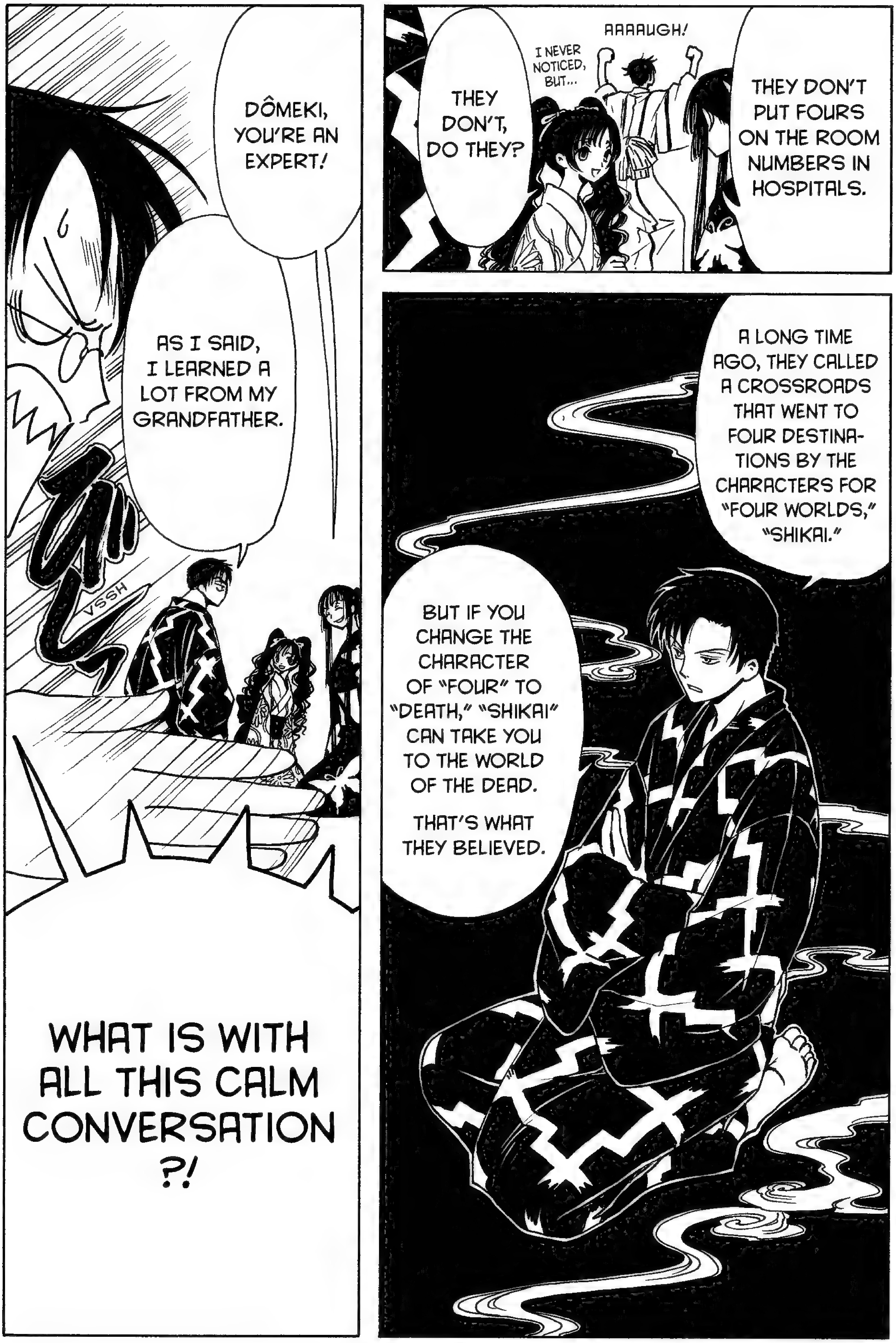

OR RATHER, HIS REMAINS.
WHAT'S THAT?
WE TOOK HIM IN.
PRIOR TO THE FUNERAL.
IS THERE SOMEONE ELSE IN THERE?
A MOURNER, MAYBE?

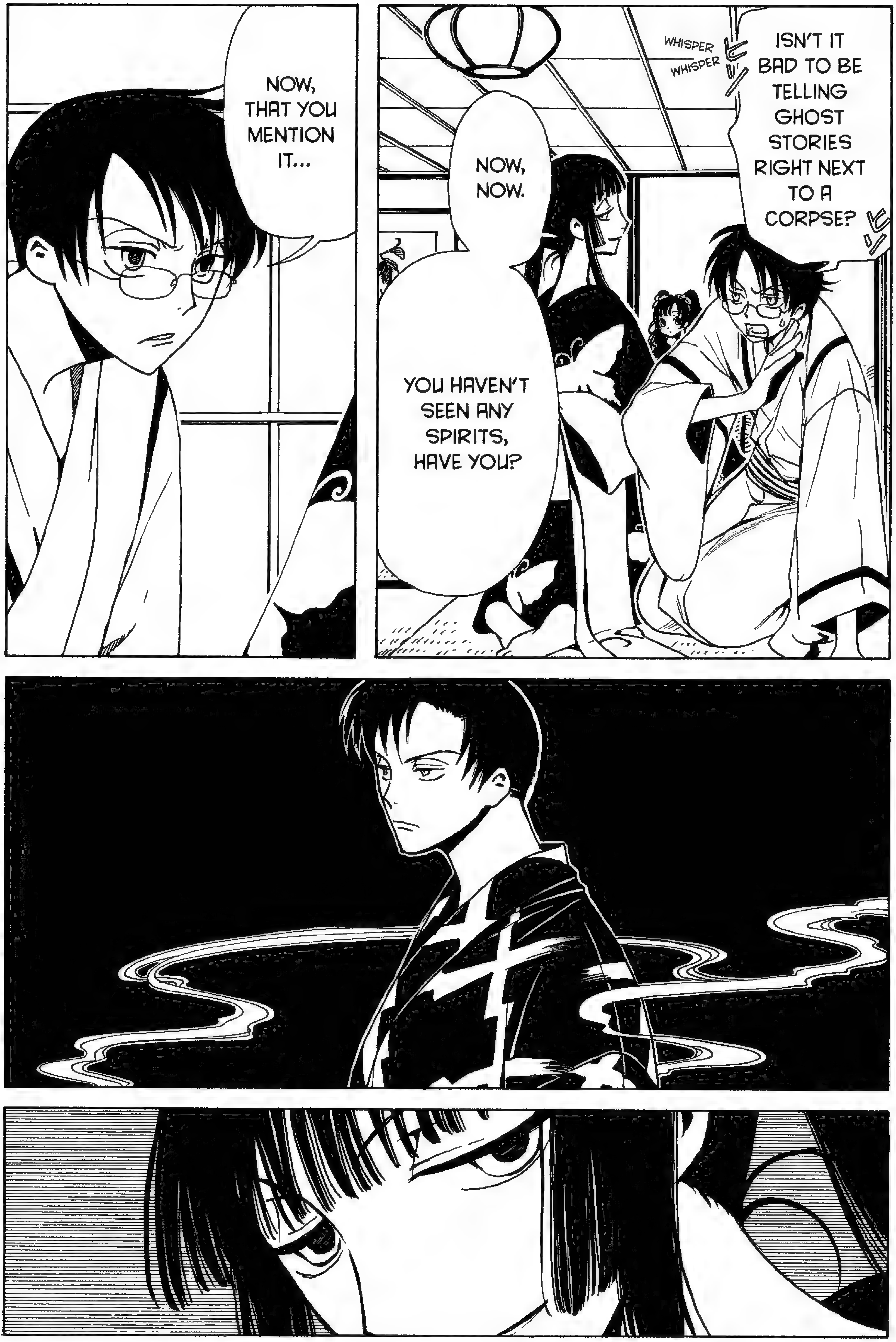

NO.
JUST THE REMAINS.
OKAY, THEN DID SOMEONE LEAVE A WINDOW OPEN IN THERE?
THAT ROOM HAS NO WINDOWS.
がたがたがた
KATAK
KATAK
KATAK
がたがた
KATAK
KATAK

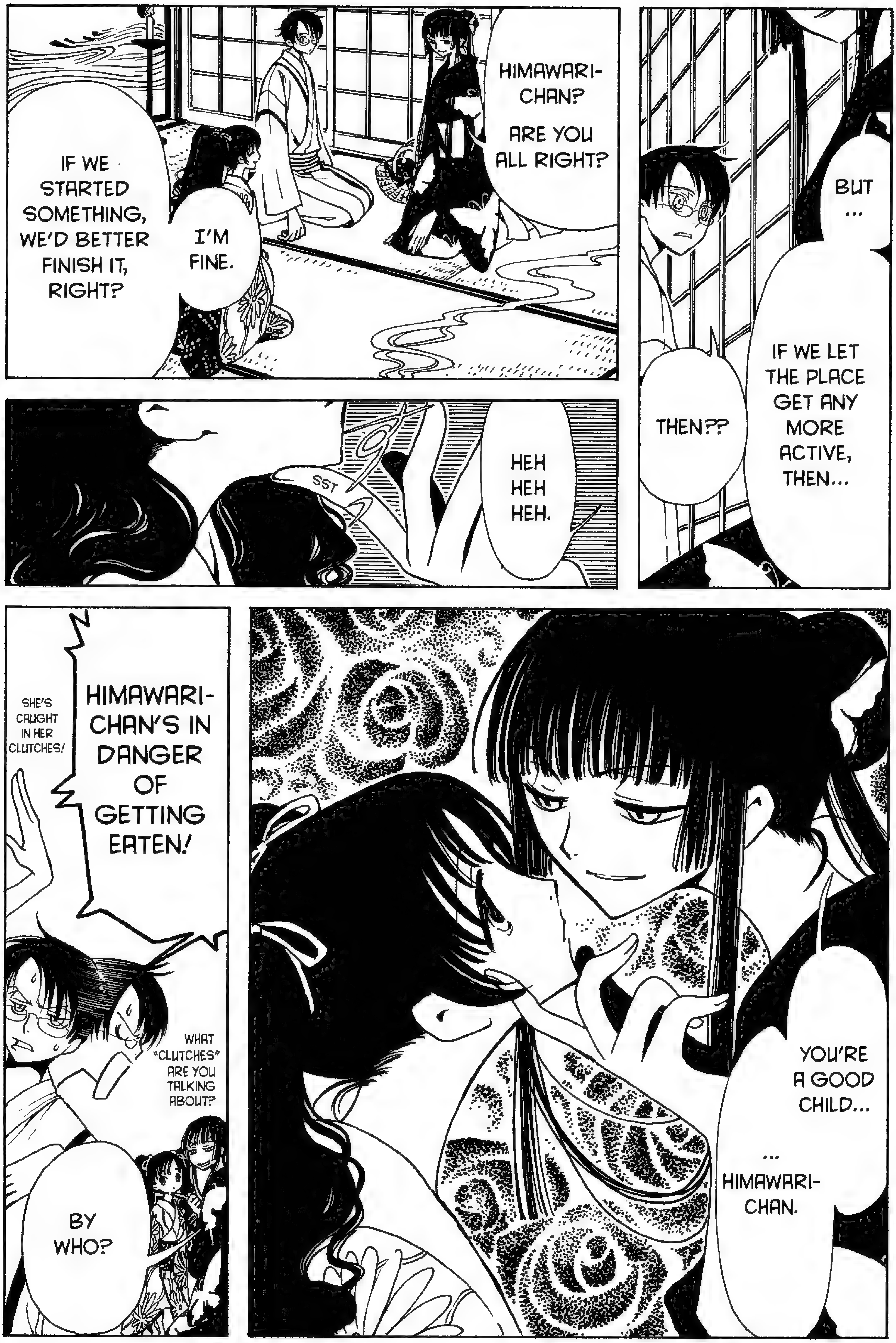

JUST AS I SAID...
KATAK KATAK
THE PLAYERS ARE ALL PRESENT.
KATAK
WHEN YOU SAID PLAYERS, DID YOU INCLUDE SOME RESTLESS CORPSE?
BLEAHH!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, HIMAWARI-CHAN!
THIS ISN'T A GHOST STORY!
IT'S A JOKE!
YOU CAN'T.

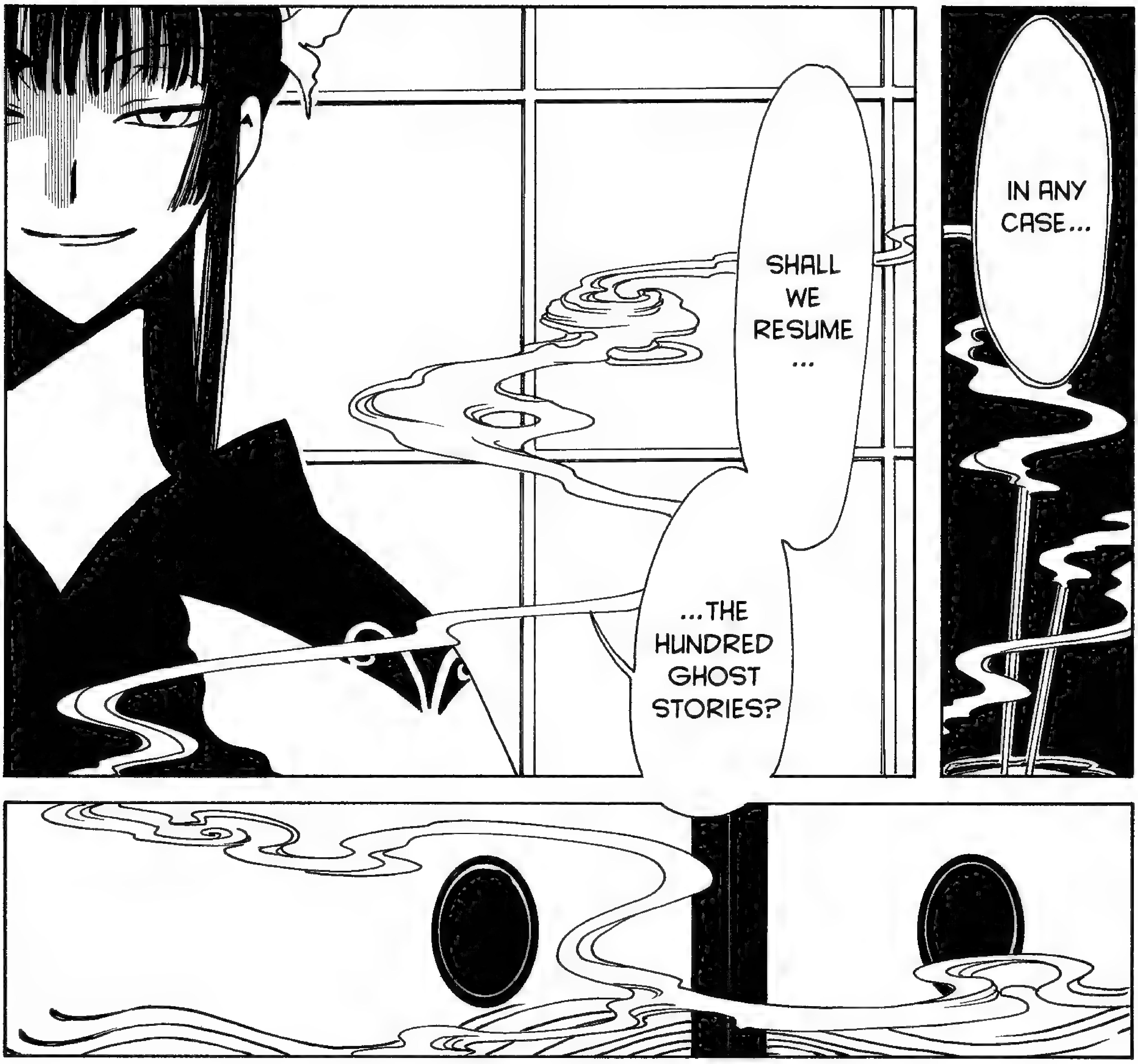

WHILE THE CEREMONY IS IN PROGRESS ...
...NO ONE IS ALLOWED BEYOND THE WARDS.
"WARDS" ?
THE FOUR CANDLES ON THEIR STANDS.
THEY'RE WARDS.
THIS ROOM IS PROTECTED BY THEIR POWER. BUT I CANNOT SPEAK FOR THE WORLD BEYOND THEM.

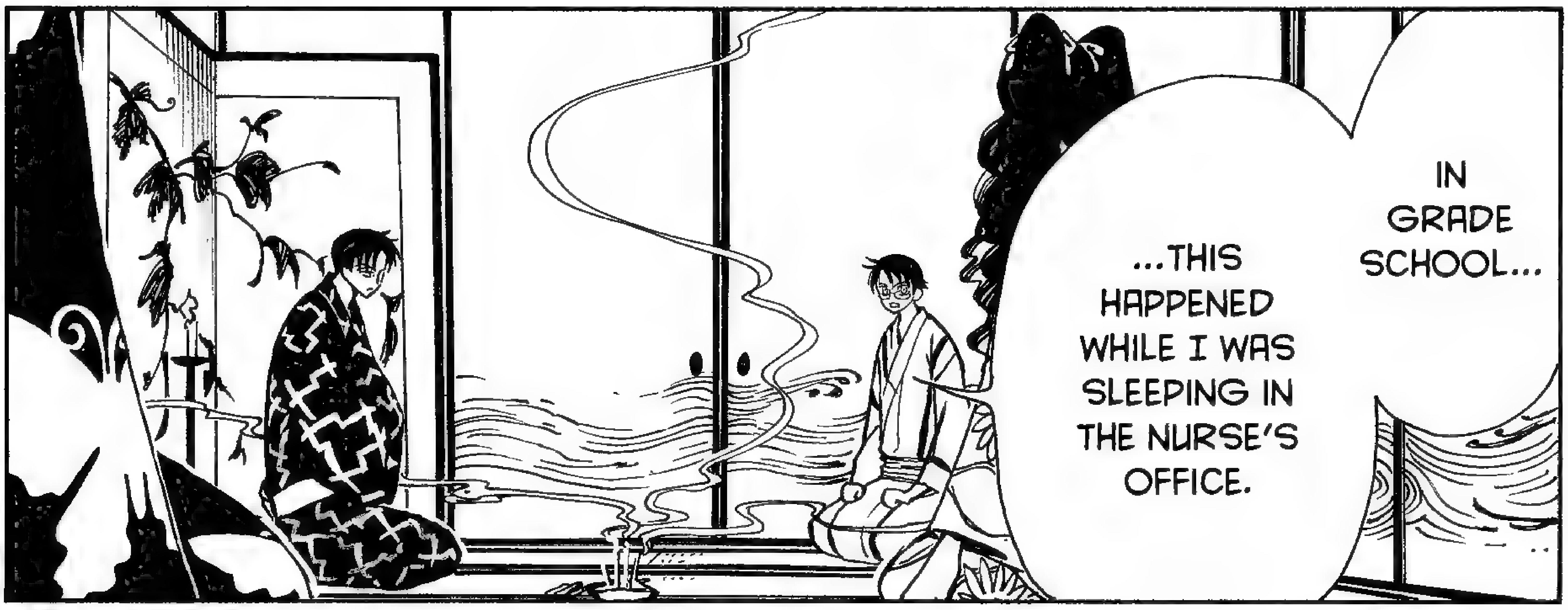

...UNTIL THE HUNDRED GHOST STORY CEREMONY IS OVER, YOU CAN'T LEAVE.
なんですと!
WHAT WAS THAT?
OH, PIPE DOWN!
THAT MEANS...
IT'S CALLED THE HUNDRED GHOST STORY FESTIVAL.
DOES THAT MEAN WE ACTUALLY NEED TO TELL A HUNDRED STORIES?
IN THE FORMAL CEREMONY, YES.
BUT THIS CEREMONY IS INFORMAL.
IF WE DO ABOUT FOUR ROUNDS, THAT SHOULD SUFFICE.
FOUR ROUNDS.
THAT MEANS FOUR STORIES EACH?
AAAAAAA
YES.
THEY SAY A FOUR-COUNT IS A COUNT THAT CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE UNDERWORLD.
ぎゃーす!
GLOOOM
I NEVER HEARD THAT BEFORE!

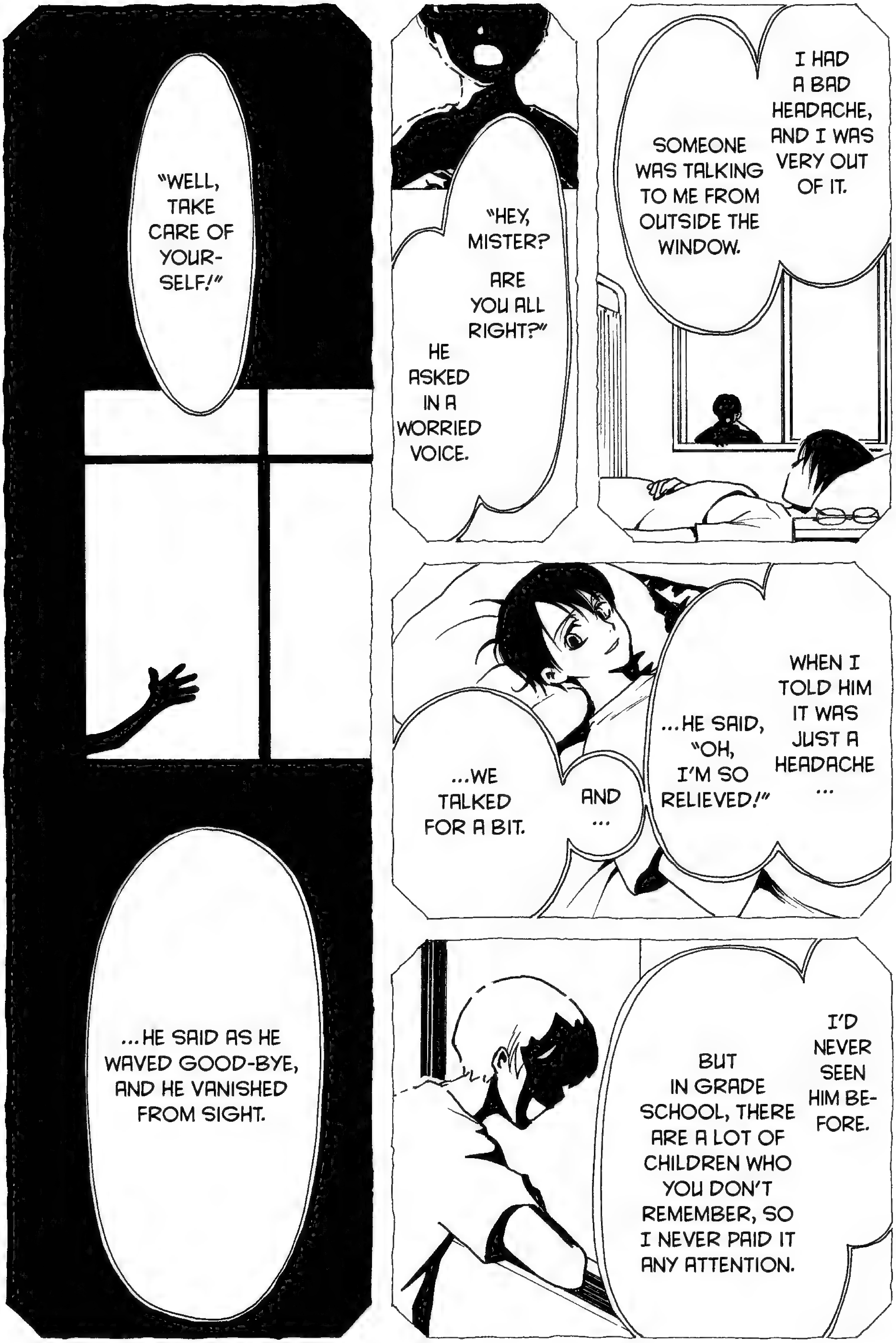

THEY DON'T PUT FOURS ON THE ROOM NUMBERS IN HOSPITALS.
AAAAUGH!
I NEVER NOTICED, BUT...
THEY DON'T, DO THEY?
A LONG TIME AGO, THEY CALLED A CROSSROADS THAT WENT TO FOUR DESTINATIONS BY THE CHARACTERS FOR "FOUR WORLDS," "SHIKAI."
BUT IF YOU CHANGE THE CHARACTER OF "FOUR" TO "DEATH," "SHIKAI" CAN TAKE YOU TO THE WORLD OF THE DEAD.
THAT'S WHAT THEY BELIEVED.
DÔMEKI, YOU'RE AN EXPERT!
AS I SAID, I LEARNED A LOT FROM MY GRANDFATHER.
VSSH
WHAT IS WITH ALL THIS CALM CONVERSATION ?!

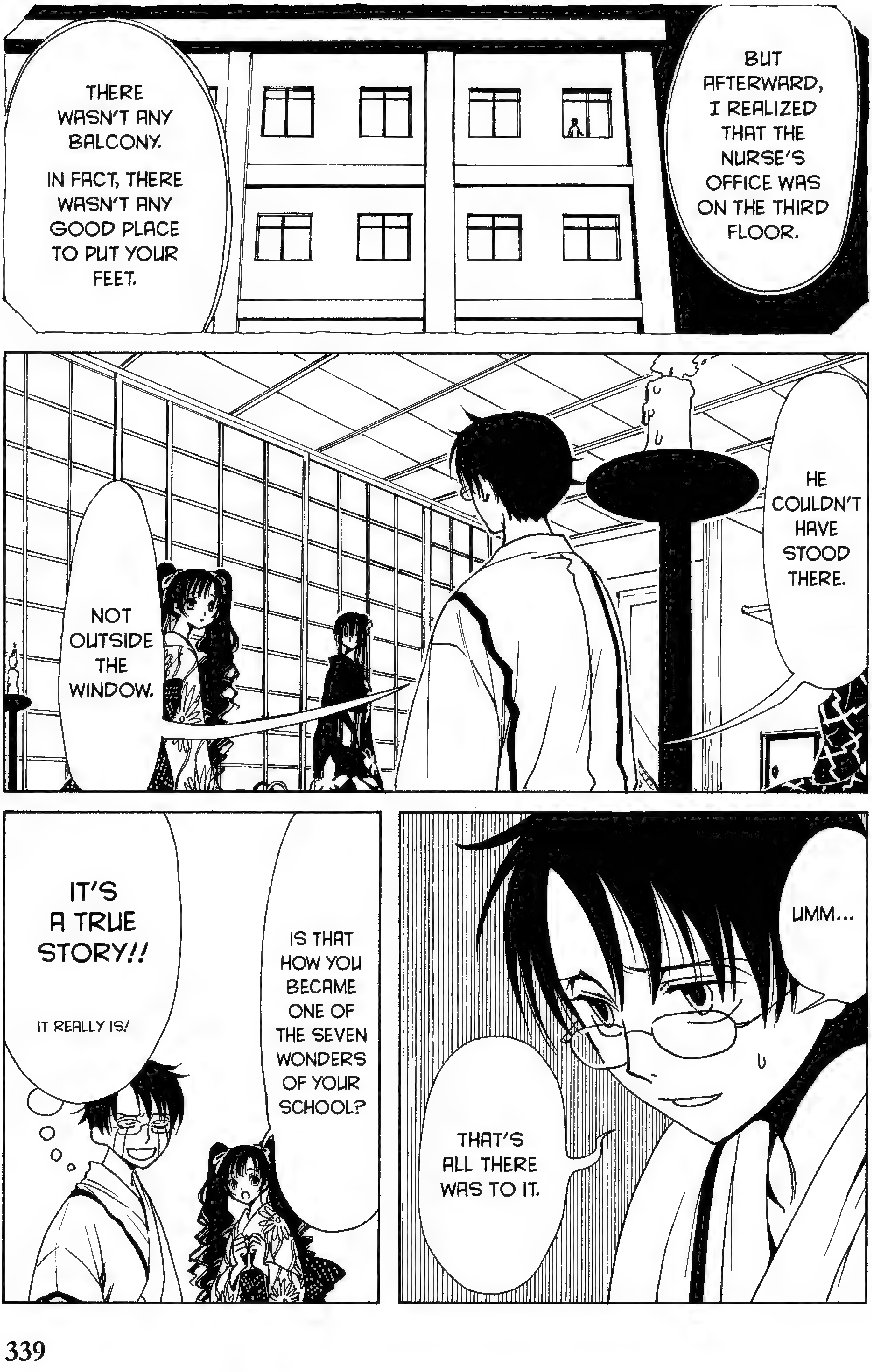

WHISPER
WHISPER
ISN'T IT BAD TO BE TELLING GHOST STORIES RIGHT NEXT TO A CORPSE?
NOW, NOW.
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SPIRITS, HAVE YOU?
NOW, THAT YOU MENTION IT...

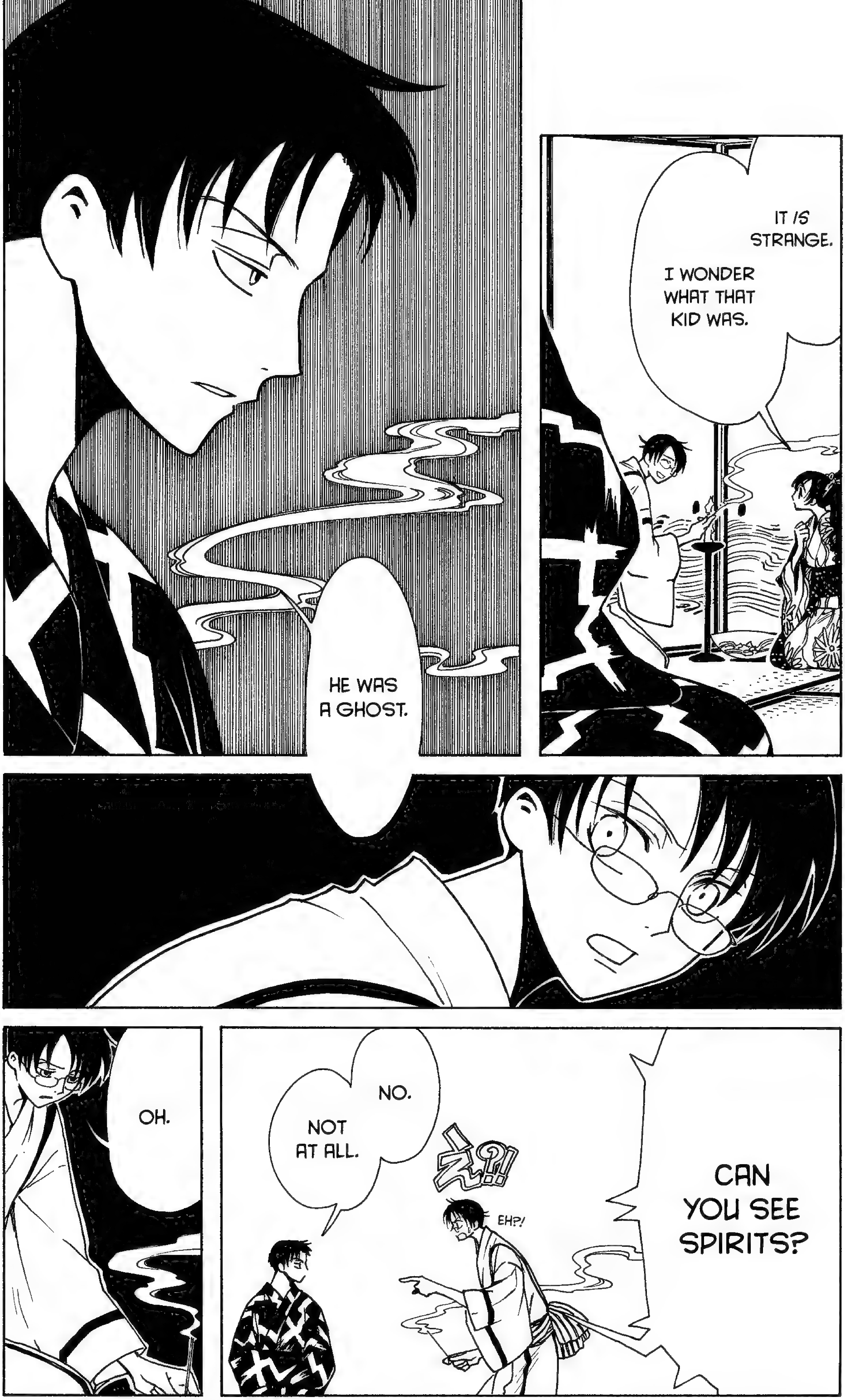

BUT ...
IF WE LET THE PLACE GET ANY MORE ACTIVE, THEN...
THEN??
HIMAWARI-CHAN? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE.
IF WE STARTED SOMETHING, WE'D BETTER FINISH IT, RIGHT?
HEH HEH HEH.
SST
YOU'RE A GOOD CHILD...
... HIMAWARI-CHAN.
HIMAWARI-CHAN'S IN DANGER OF GETTING EATEN!
SHE'S CAUGHT IN HER CLUTCHES!
WHAT "CLUTCHES" ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BY WHO?

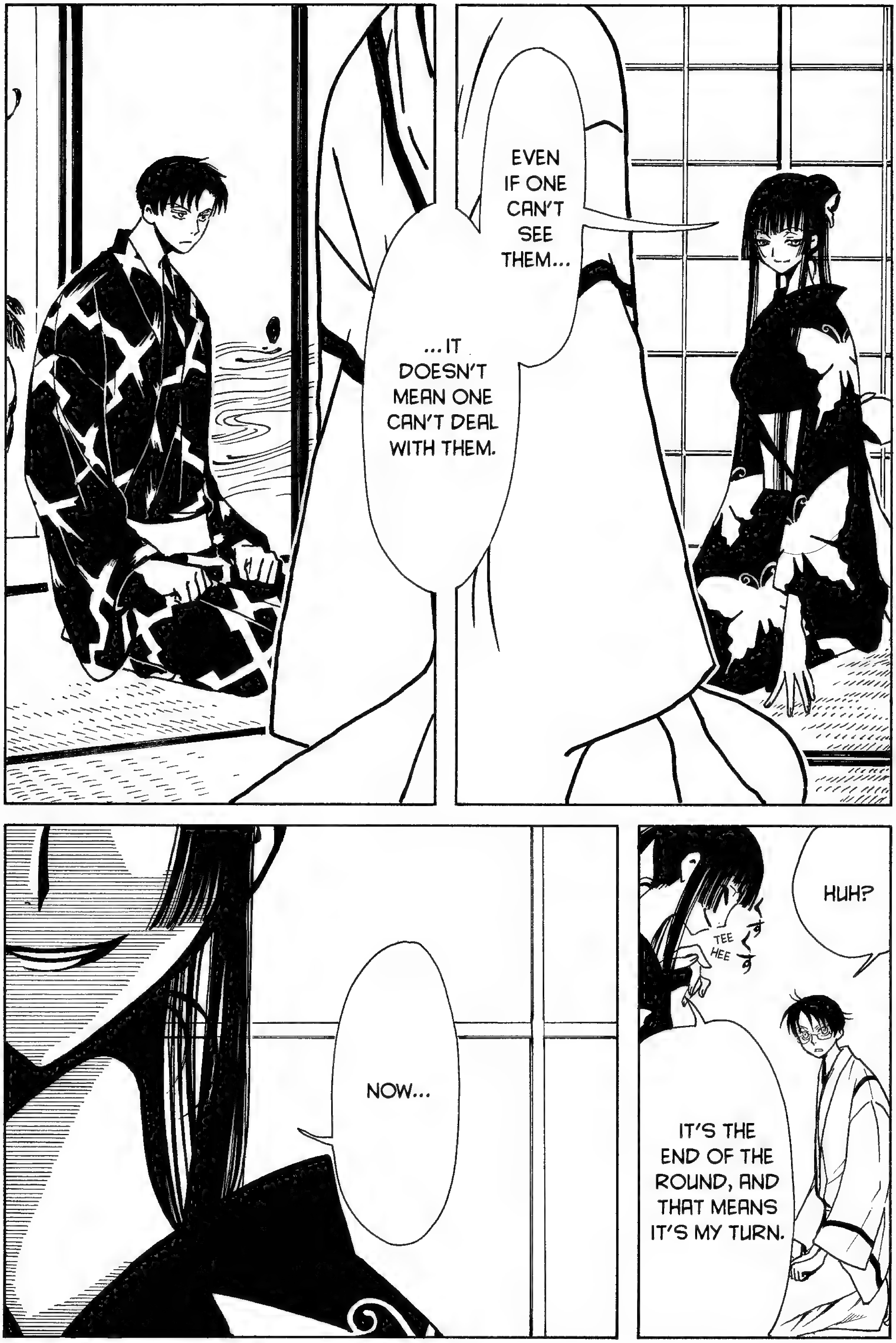

IN ANY CASE...
SHALL WE RESUME...
...THE HUNDRED GHOST STORIES?


IN GRADE SCHOOL...
...THIS HAPPENED WHILE I WAS SLEEPING IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE.

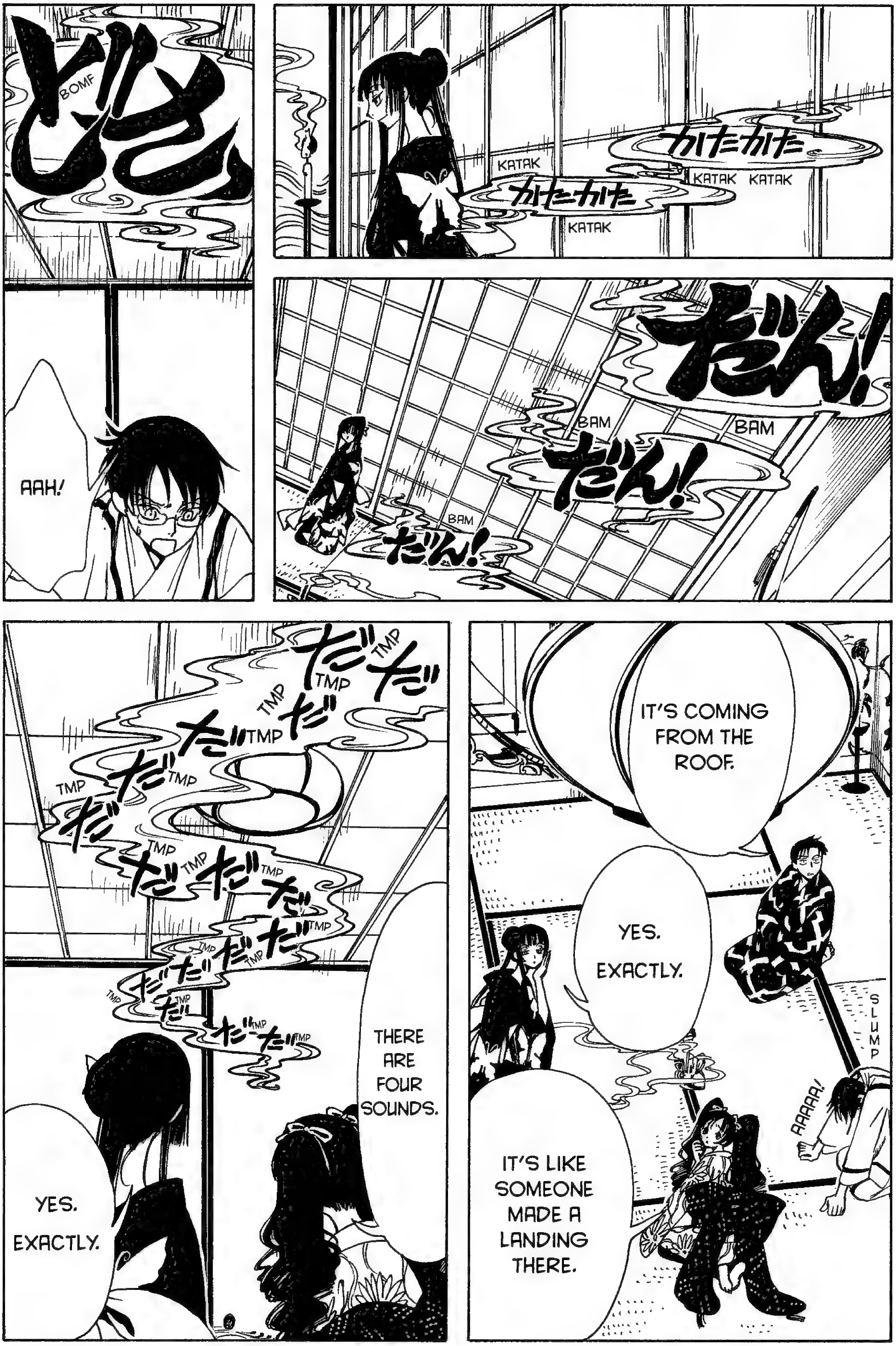

I HAD A BAD HEADACHE, AND I WAS VERY OUT OF IT.
SOMEONE WAS TALKING TO ME FROM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW.
"HEY, MISTER? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?" HE ASKED IN A WORRIED VOICE.
WHEN I TOLD HIM IT WAS JUST A HEADACHE ...
...HE SAID, "OH, I'M SO RELIEVED!"
AND ...
...WE TALKED FOR A BIT.
I'D NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE.
BUT IN GRADE SCHOOL, THERE ARE A LOT OF CHILDREN WHO YOU DON'T REMEMBER, SO I NEVER PAID IT ANY ATTENTION.
"WELL, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!"
...HE SAID AS HE WAVED GOOD-BYE, AND HE VANISHED FROM SIGHT.

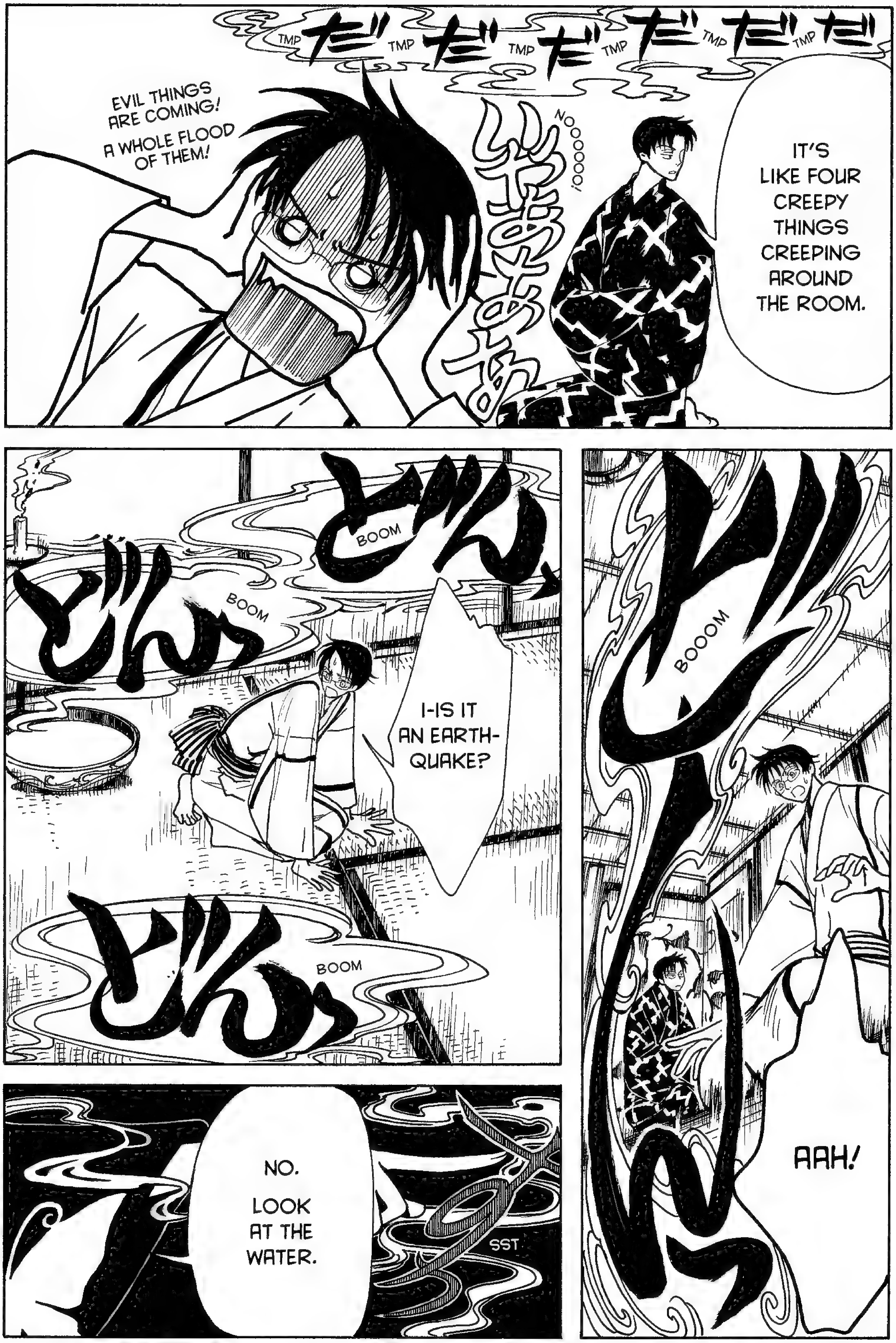

BUT AFTERWARD, I REALIZED THAT THE NURSE'S OFFICE WAS ON THE THIRD FLOOR.
THERE WASN'T ANY BALCONY.
IN FACT, THERE WASN'T ANY GOOD PLACE TO PUT YOUR FEET.
HE COULDN'T HAVE STOOD THERE.
NOT OUTSIDE THE WINDOW.
UMM...
THAT'S ALL THERE WAS TO IT.
IS THAT HOW YOU BECAME ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF YOUR SCHOOL?
IT'S A TRUE STORY!!
IT REALLY IS!

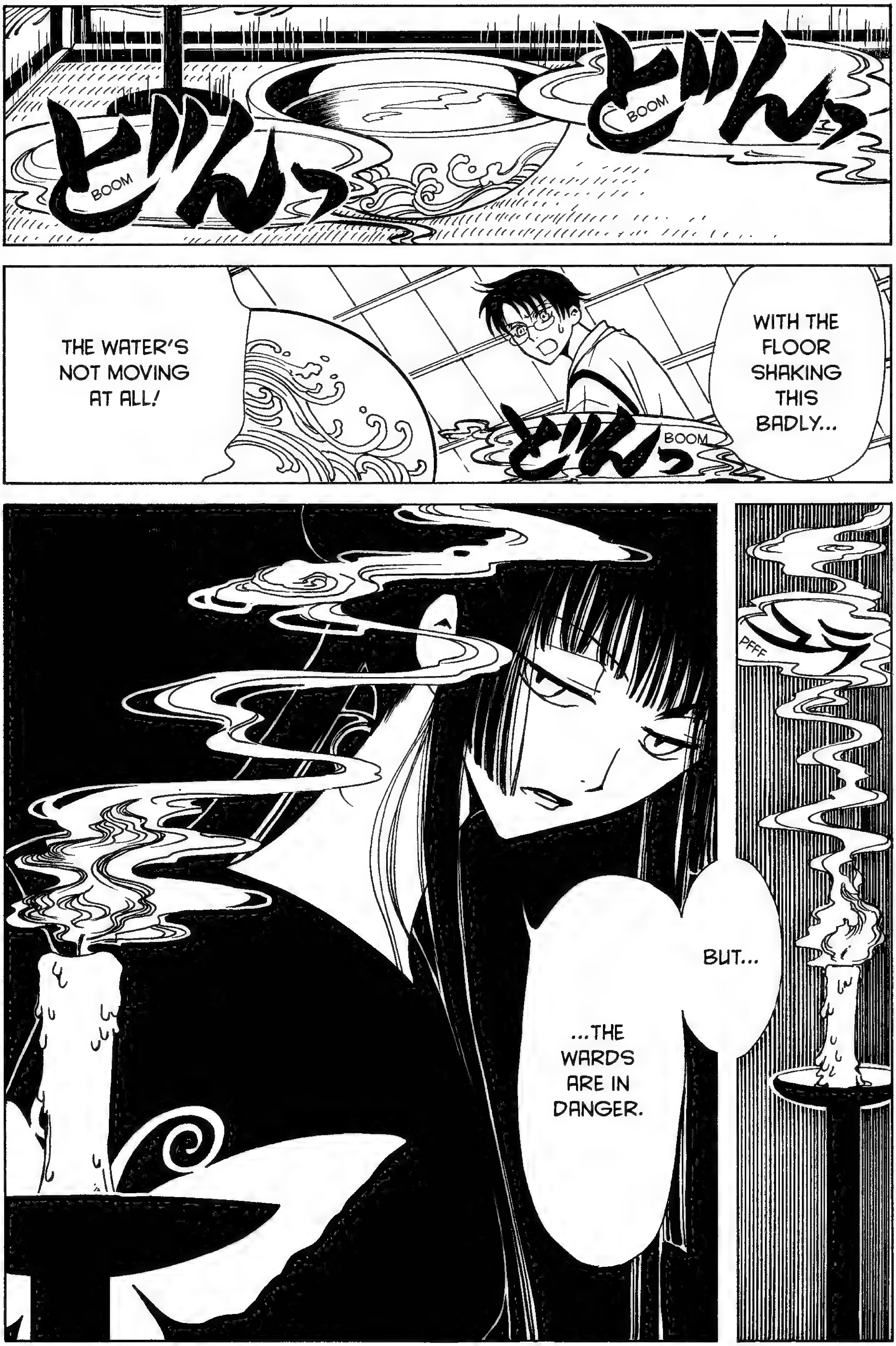

IT IS STRANGE.
I WONDER WHAT THAT KID WAS.
HE WAS A GHOST.
CAN YOU SEE SPIRITS?
え?!!
EH?!
NO.
NOT AT ALL.
OH.


EVEN IF ONE CAN'T SEE THEM...
...IT DOESN'T MEAN ONE CAN'T DEAL WITH THEM.
TEE HEE
すす
HUH?
IT'S THE END OF THE ROUND, AND THAT MEANS IT'S MY TURN.
NOW...

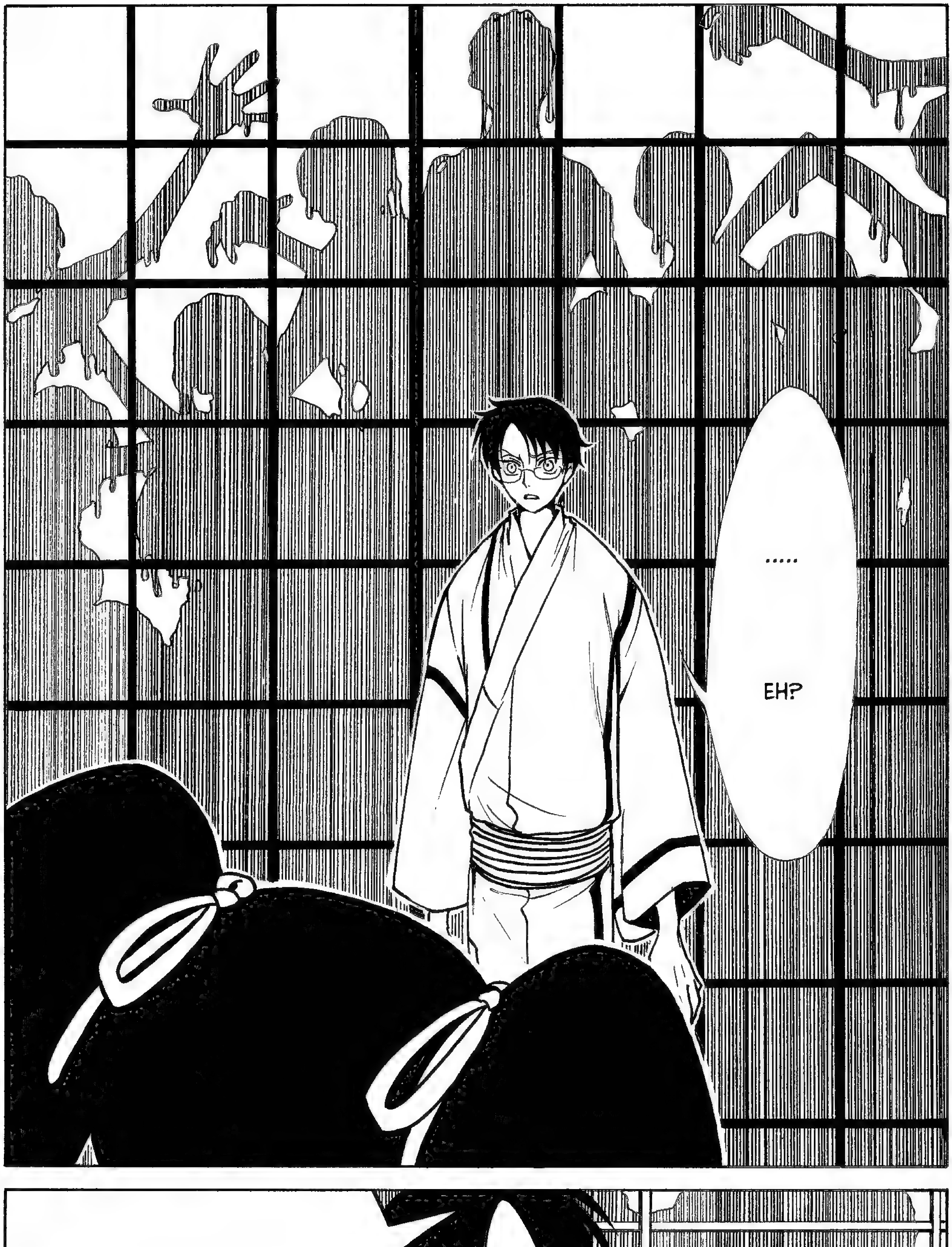
THAT THING SHOWING ON THE SHOJI PAPER DOOR BEHIND ME...
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?

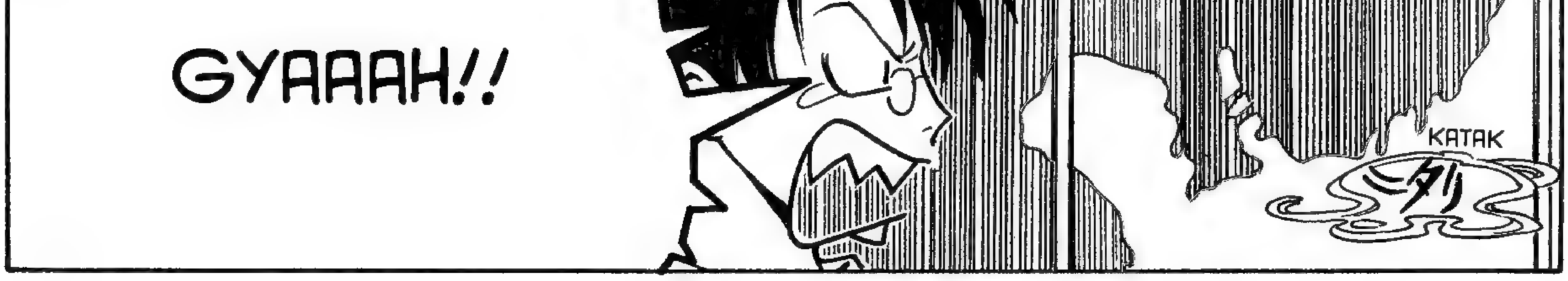

カタカタ
KATAK KATAK
カタカタ
KATAK KATAK
どさ
BOMF
だん!
BAM
だん!
BAM
だん!
BAM
AAH!
IT'S COMING FROM THE ROOF.
YES. EXACTLY.
IT'S LIKE SOMEONE MADE A LANDING THERE.
SLUMP
AAAAA!
だだだだだだだだだだだだだだだだ
TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP
THERE ARE FOUR SOUNDS.
YES. EXACTLY.

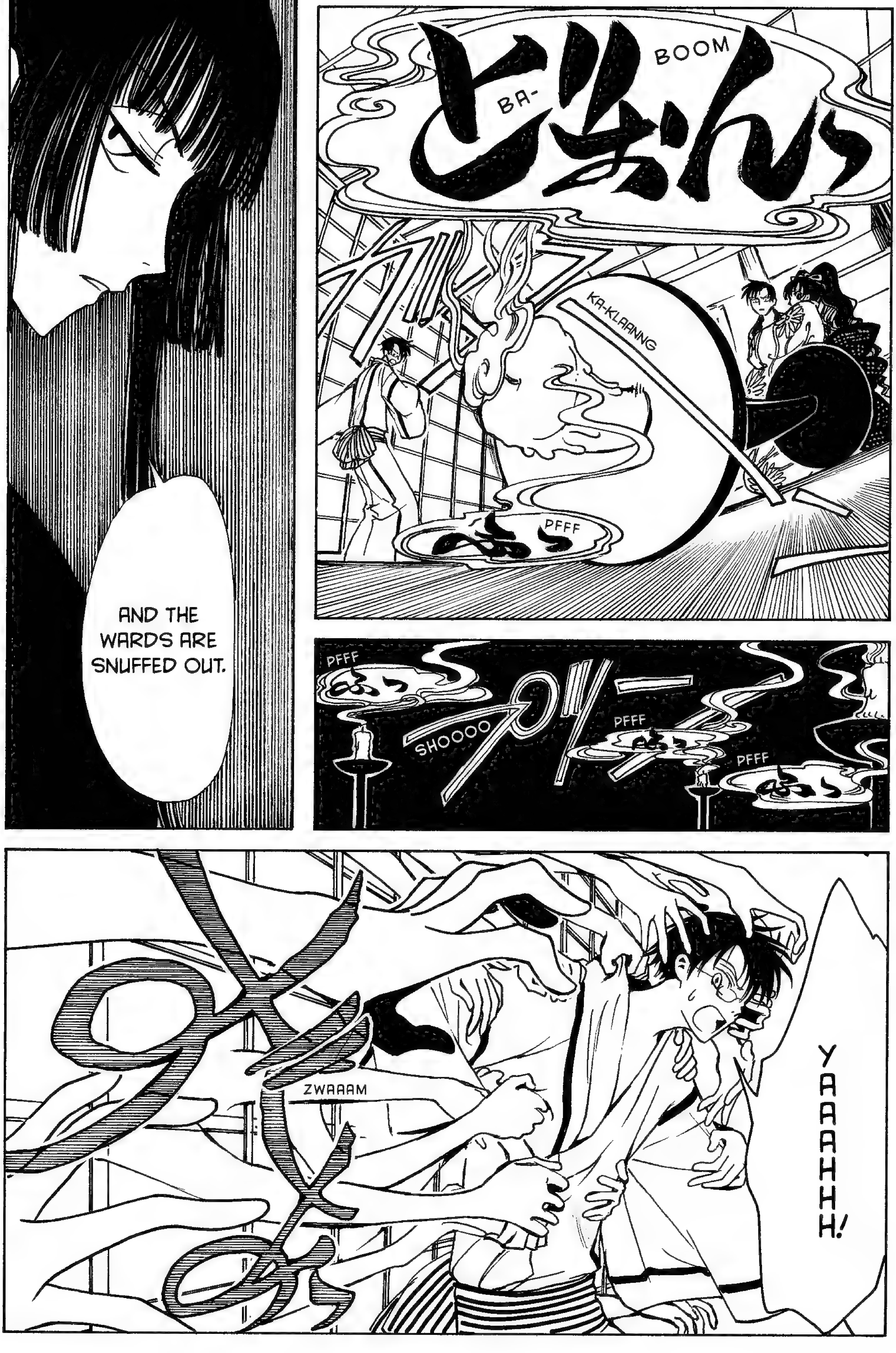

TMP だ TMP だ TMP だ TMP だ TMP だ TMP だ
IT'S LIKE FOUR CREEPY THINGS CREEPING AROUND THE ROOM.
いやあああ NOOOOOO!
EVIL THINGS ARE COMING! A WHOLE FLOOD OF THEM!
どーん BOOOM
AAH!
どん BOOM
どん BOOM
I-IS IT AN EARTH-QUAKE?
どん BOOM
SST
NO. LOOK AT THE WATER.

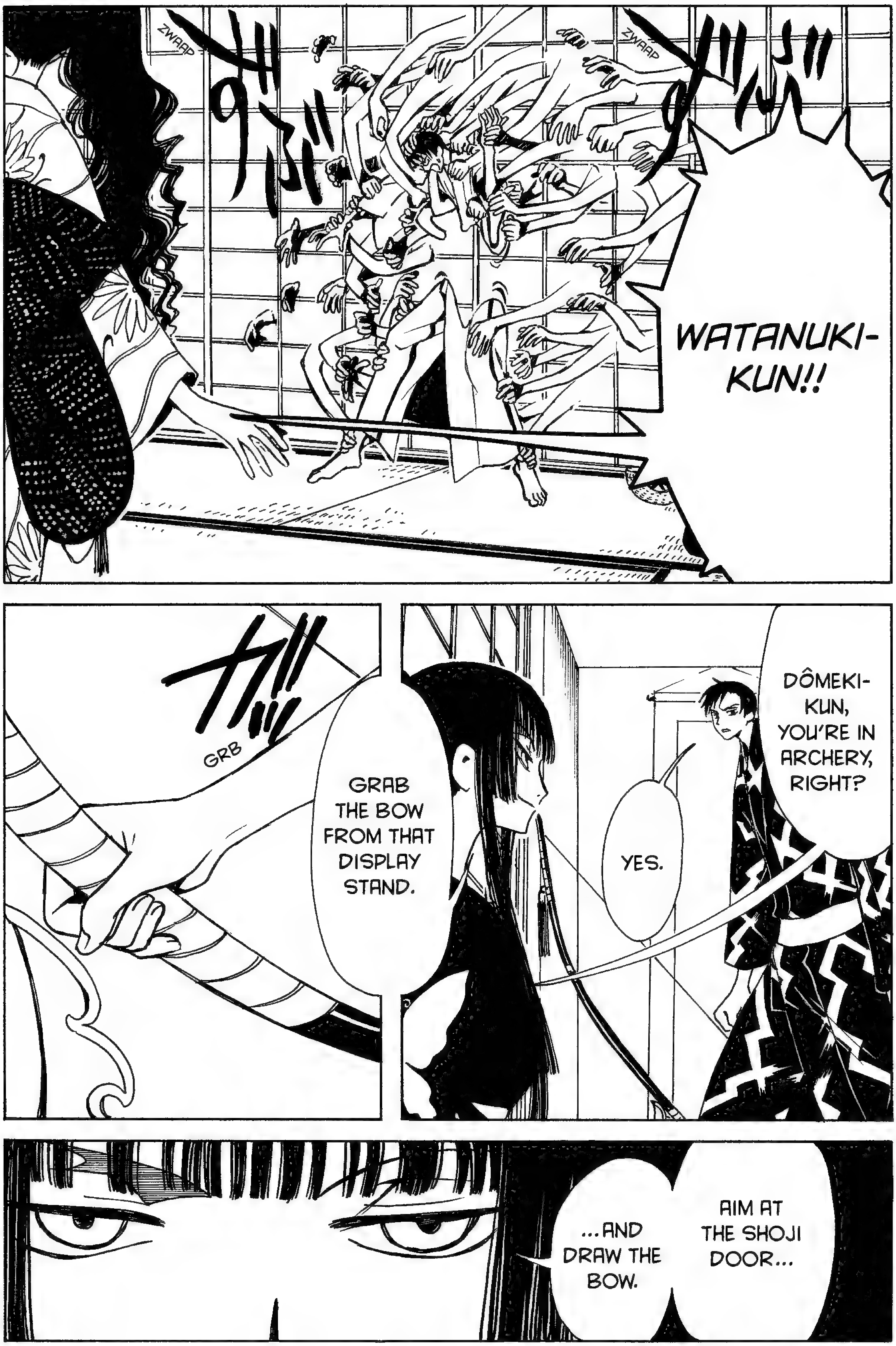

どいんっ
BOOM
どいんっ
BOOM
WITH THE FLOOR SHAKING THIS BADLY...
どいんっ
BOOM
THE WATER'S NOT MOVING AT ALL!
フッ
PFFF
BUT...
...THE WARDS ARE IN DANGER.

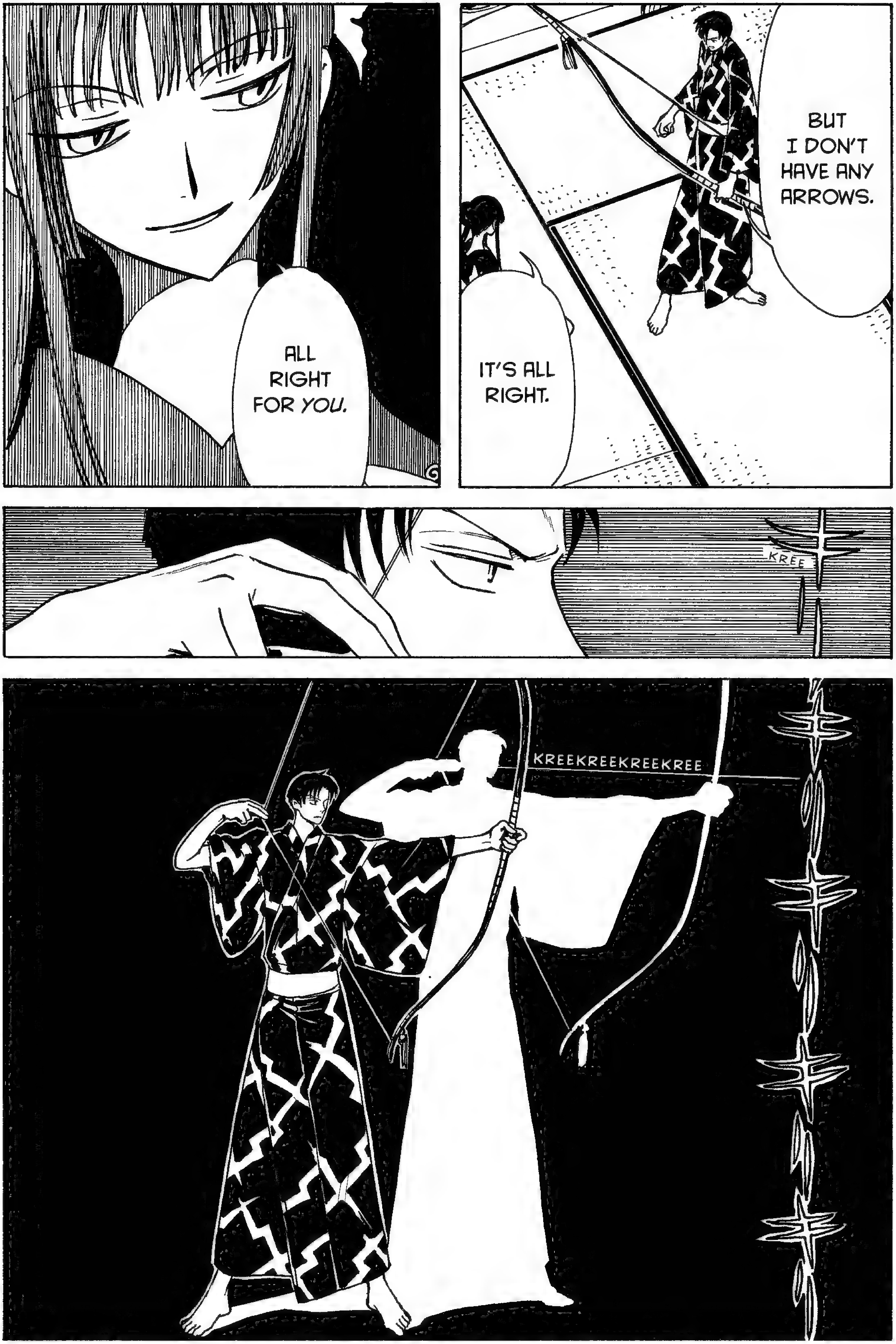
どんっ!
BOOM!
グラ
RMMMBL
RMMMBL
グラ
どんっ
BOOM
グラ
RMMMBL
AAH!
あっ
AH!
YOU BASTARD, DÔMEKI!
HE COULDN'T STAND SEEING ME WITH SUCH A WONDERFUL GIRLFRIEND, THE JERK!
THANKS.
WATANUKI-KUN! BEHIND YOU!!


.....
EH?

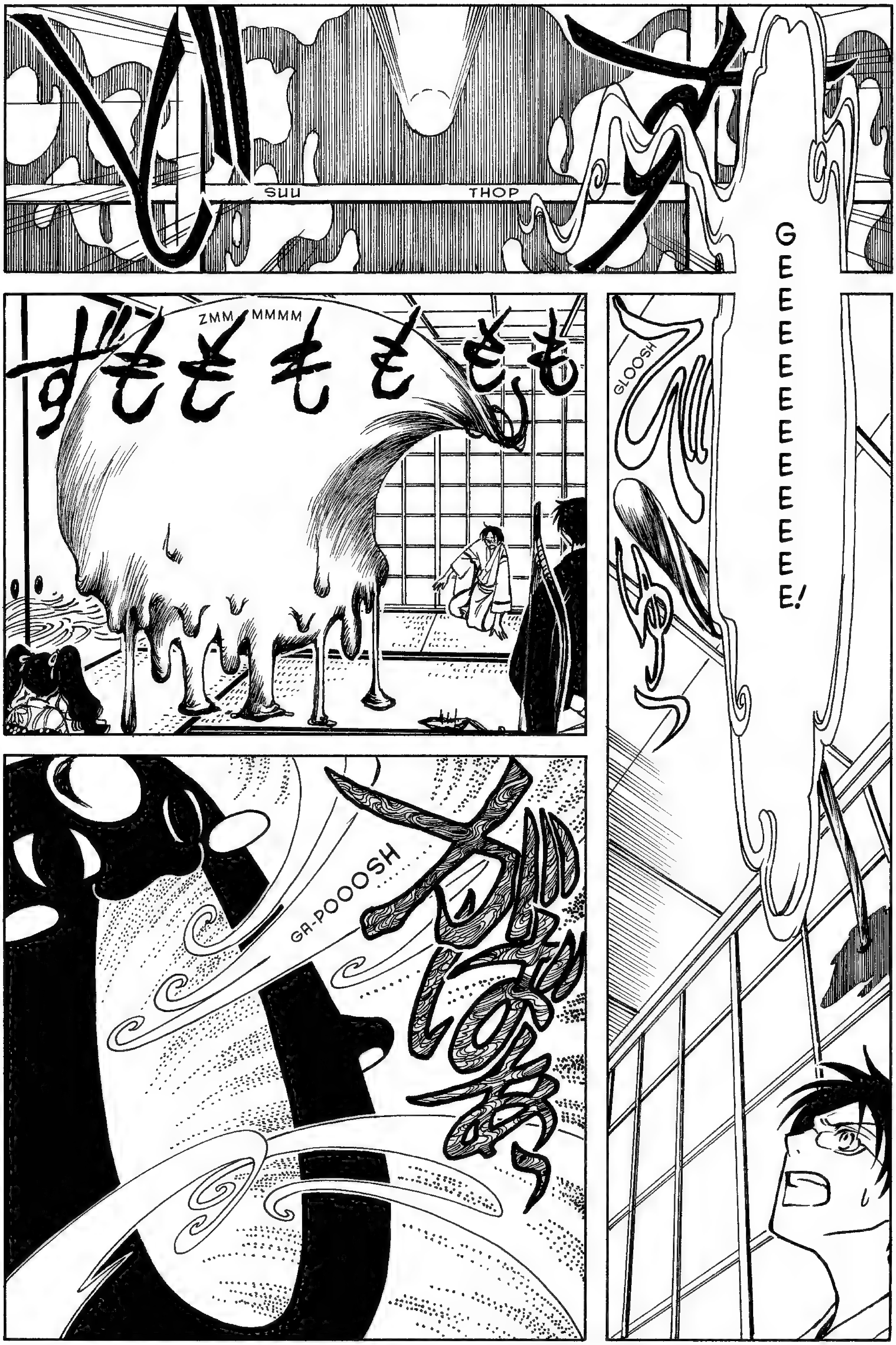

GYAAAH!!
KATAK

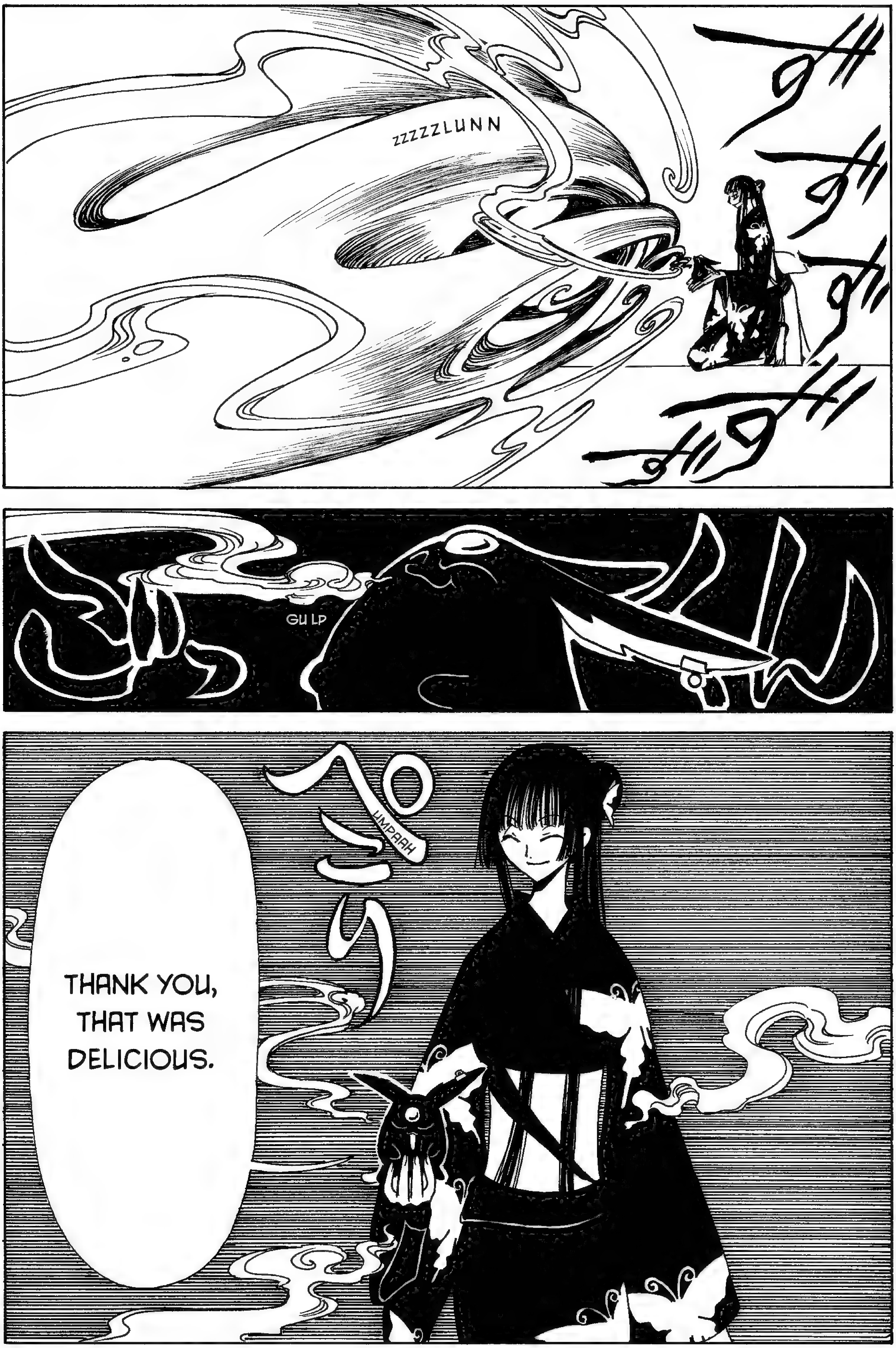

BA-BOOM
KA-KLAANG
PFFF
PFFF
SHOOOO
PFFF
PFFF
AND THE WARDS ARE SNUFFED OUT.
YAAAAHHH!
ZWAAAM

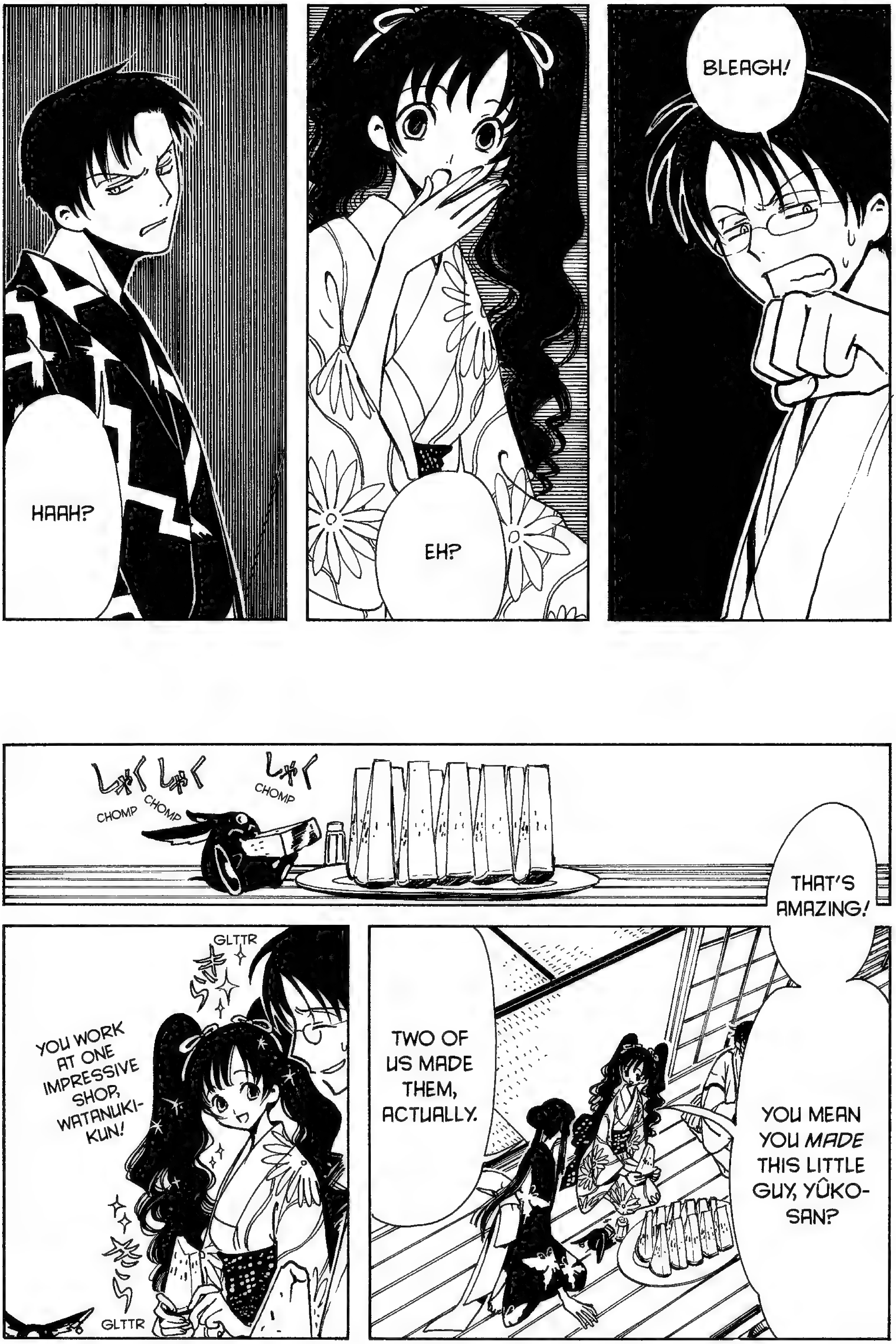

ZWAAP
ZWAAP
WATANUKI-KUN!!
DÔMEKI-KUN, YOU'RE IN ARCHERY, RIGHT?
YES.
GRAB THE BOW FROM THAT DISPLAY STAND.
ガッ
GRB
AIM AT THE SHOJI DOOR...
...AND DRAW THE BOW.

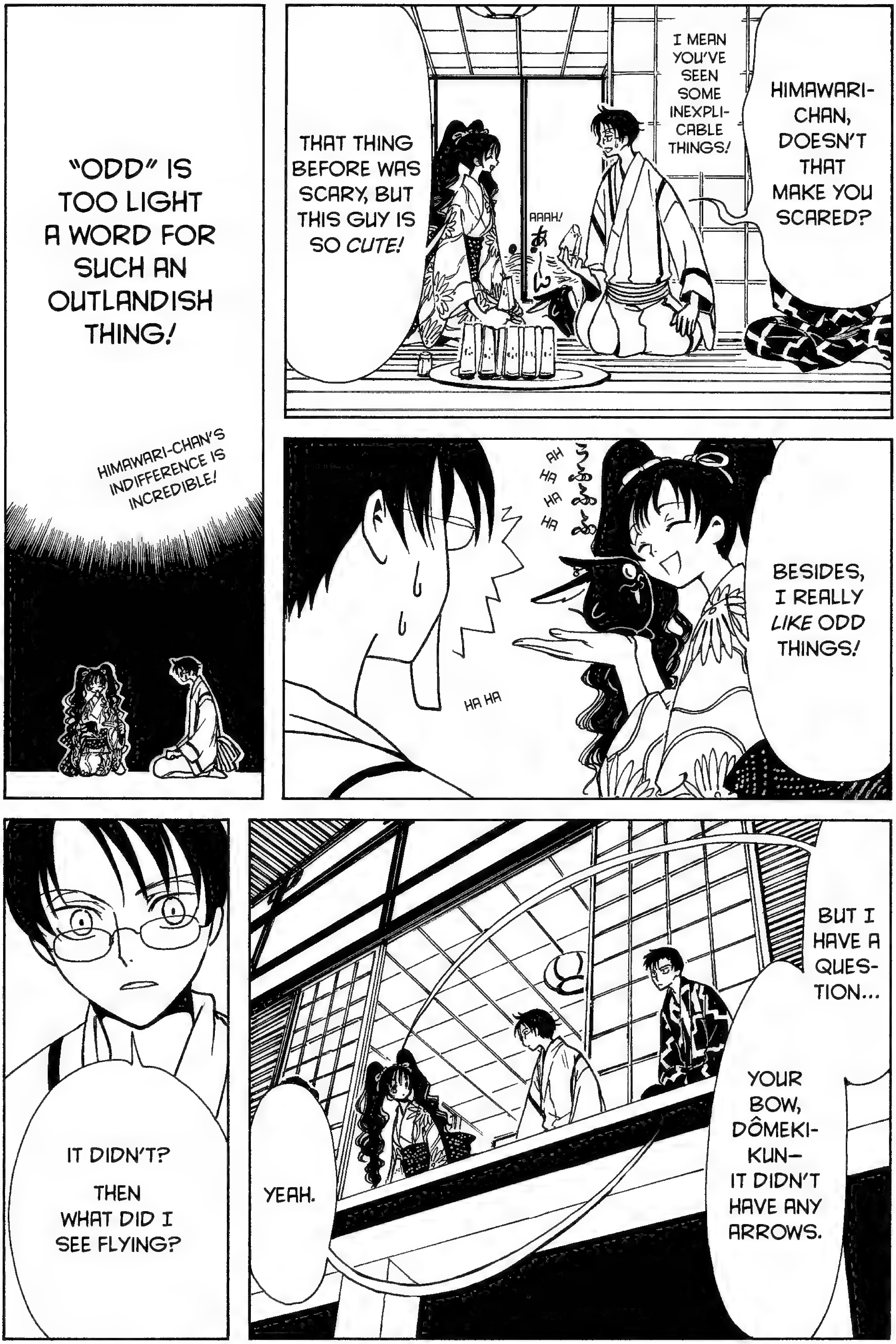

BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY ARROWS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
ALL RIGHT FOR *YOU.*
KREE
KREEKREEKREEKREE

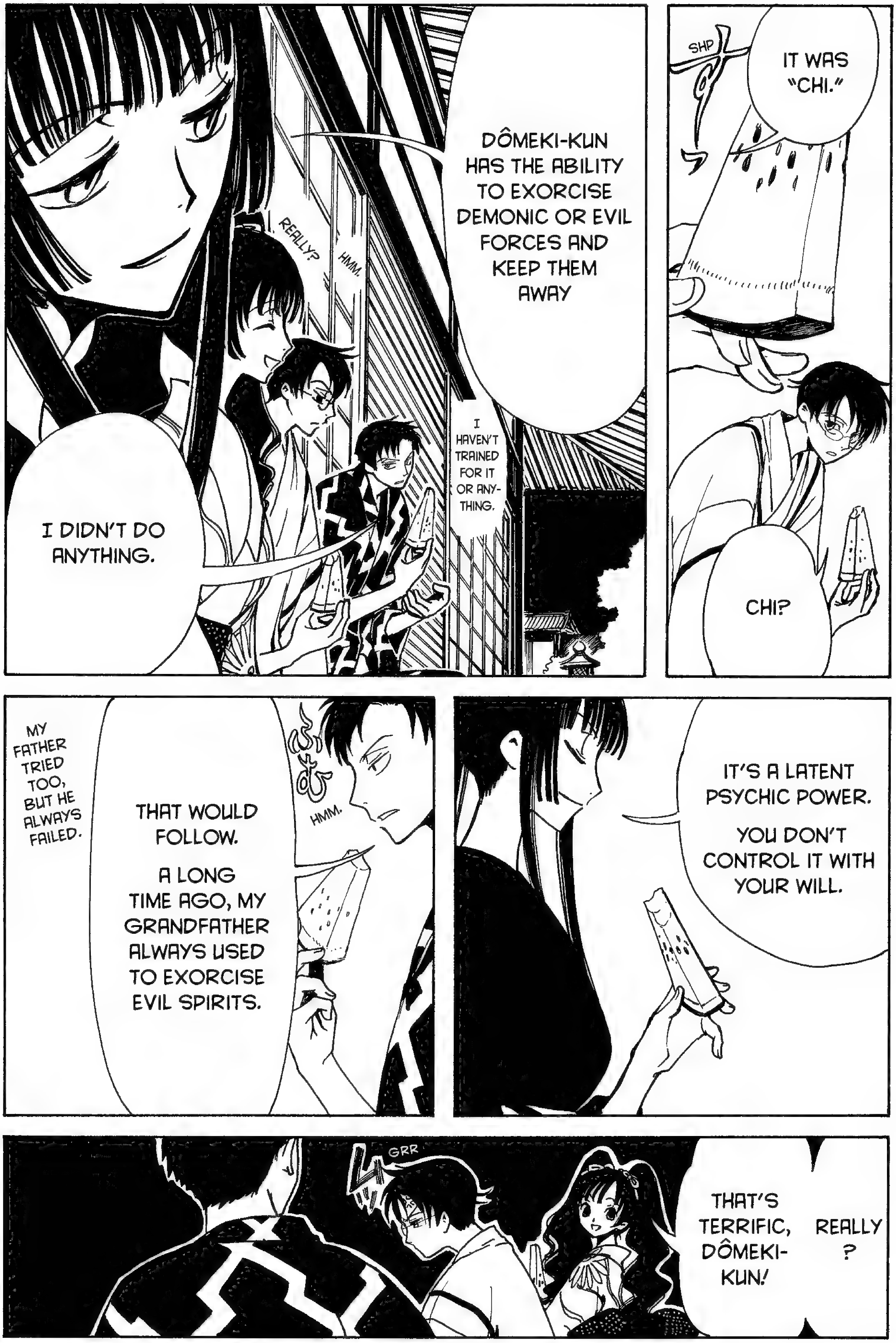
FU-BOING

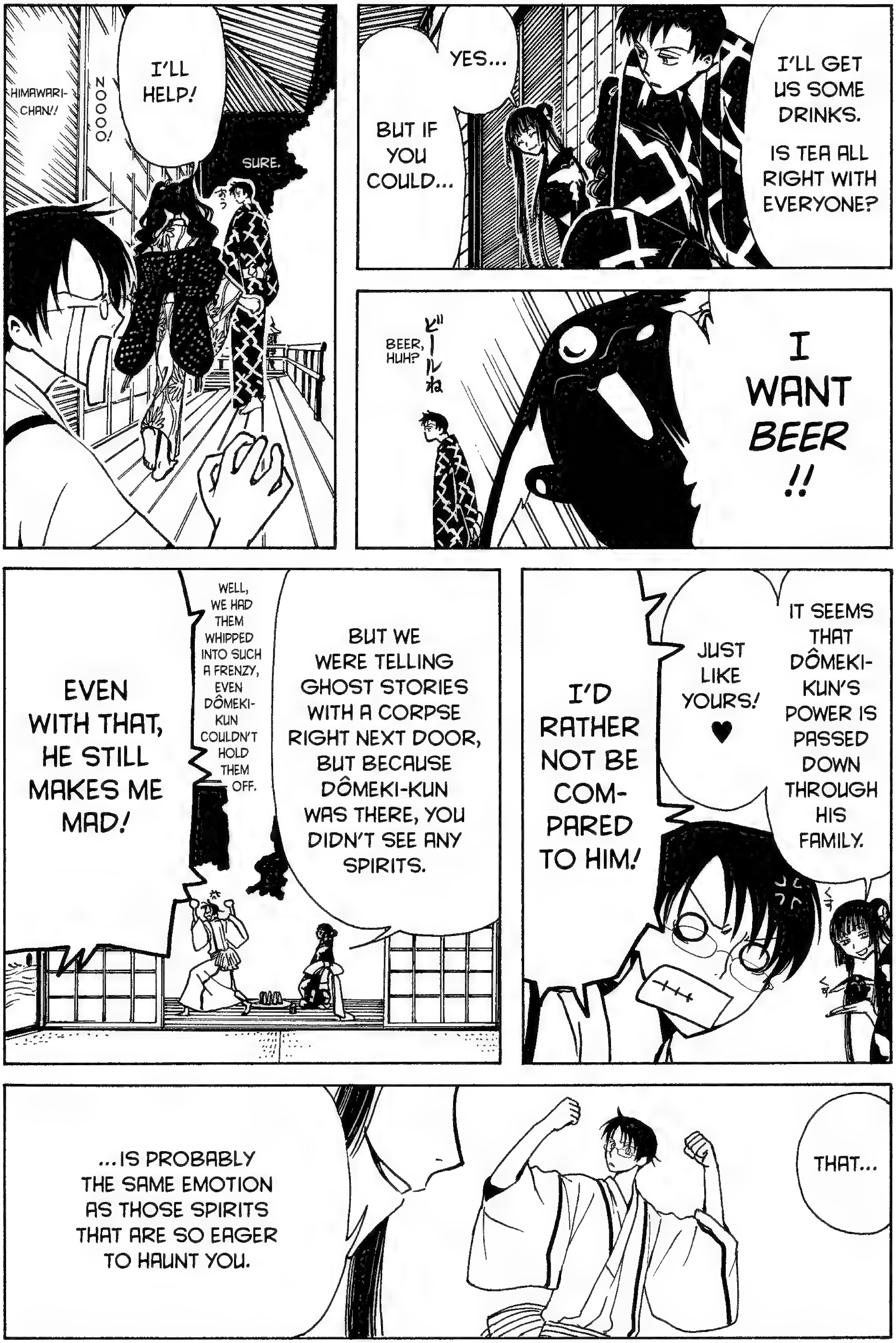

THOP
SUU
GEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
GLOOSH
ZMM MMMM
ずもももももも
GA-POOOSH

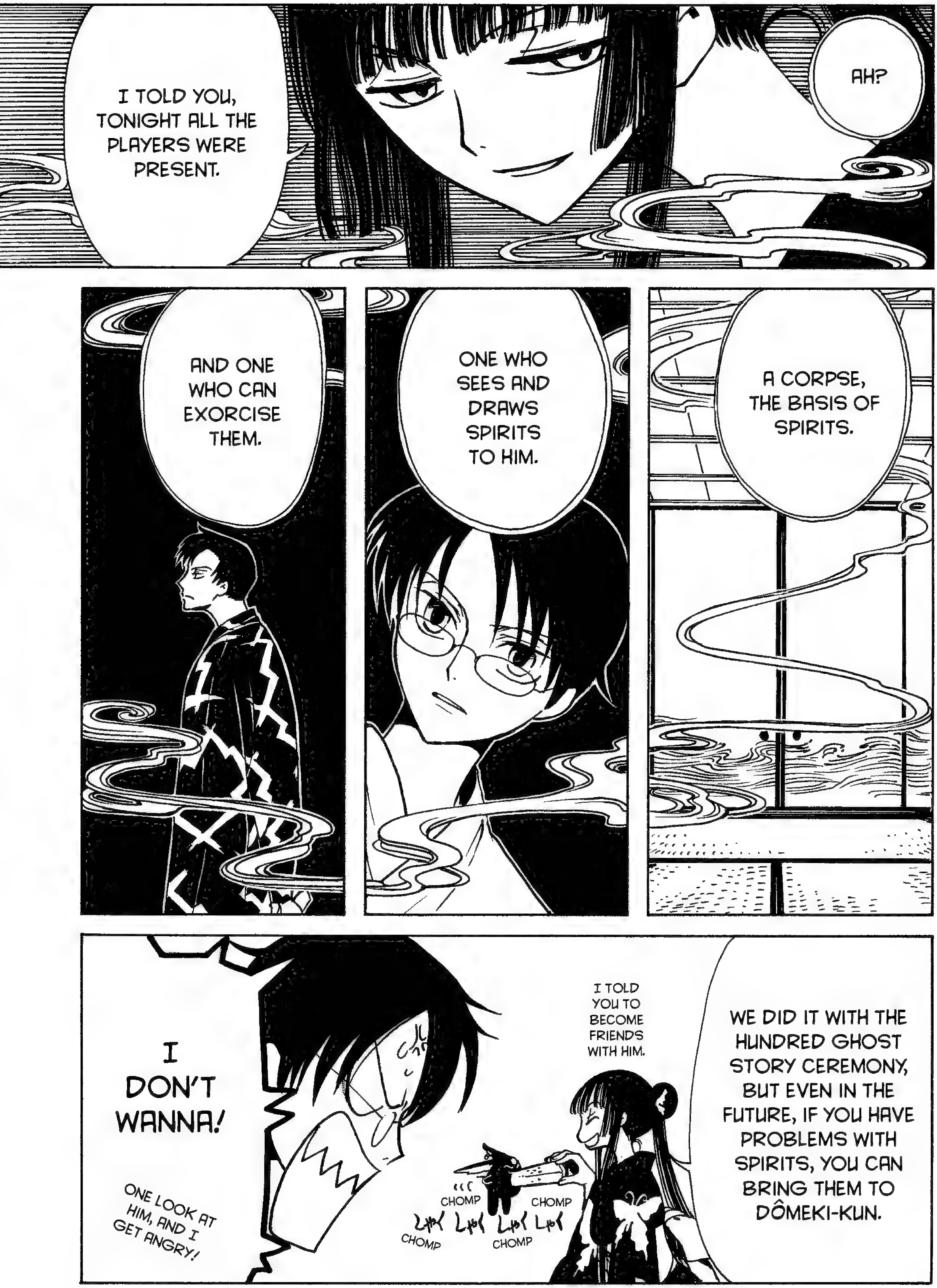

ZZZZZLUNN
GULP
HMPAAH
THANK YOU, THAT WAS DELICIOUS.


BLEAGH!
EH?
HAAH?
しゃく しゃく CHOMP CHOMP
しゃく CHOMP
THAT'S AMAZING!
YOU MEAN YOU *MADE* THIS LITTLE GUY, YÛKO-SAN?
TWO OF US MADE THEM, ACTUALLY.
YOU WORK AT ONE IMPRESSIVE SHOP, WATANUKI-KUN!
きら GLTTR
きら GLTTR

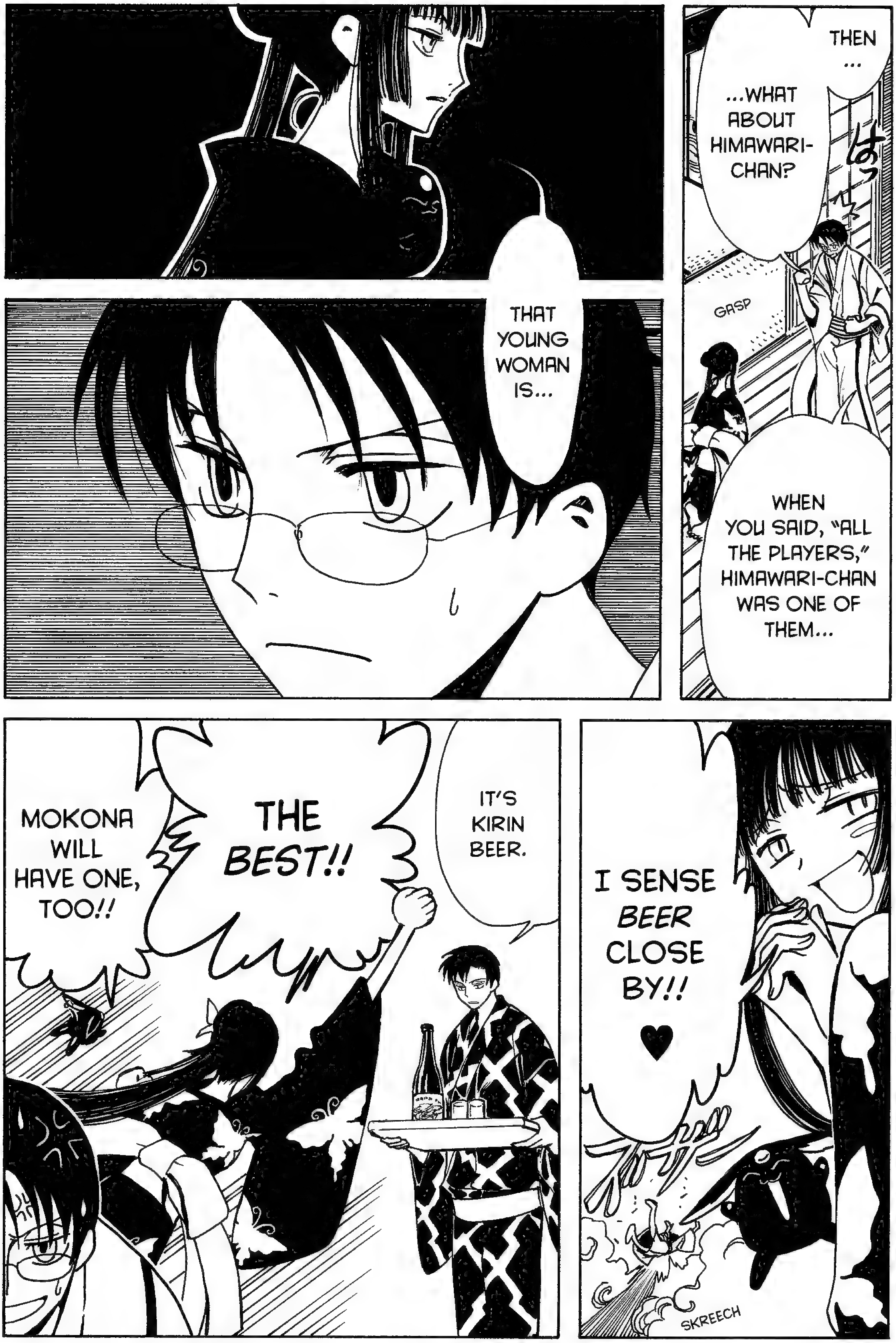

HIMAWARI-CHAN, DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU SCARED?
I MEAN YOU'VE SEEN SOME INEXPLICABLE THINGS!
AAAH!
あーん
THAT THING BEFORE WAS SCARY, BUT THIS GUY IS SO *CUTE!*
BESIDES, I REALLY *LIKE* ODD THINGS!
うふふふ
AH HA HA HA
HA HA
"ODD" IS TOO LIGHT A WORD FOR SUCH AN OUTLANDISH THING!
HIMAWARI-CHAN'S INDIFFERENCE IS INCREDIBLE!
BUT I HAVE A QUESTION...
YOUR BOW, DÔMEKI-KUN— IT DIDN'T HAVE ANY ARROWS.
YEAH.
IT DIDN'T? THEN WHAT DID I SEE FLYING?

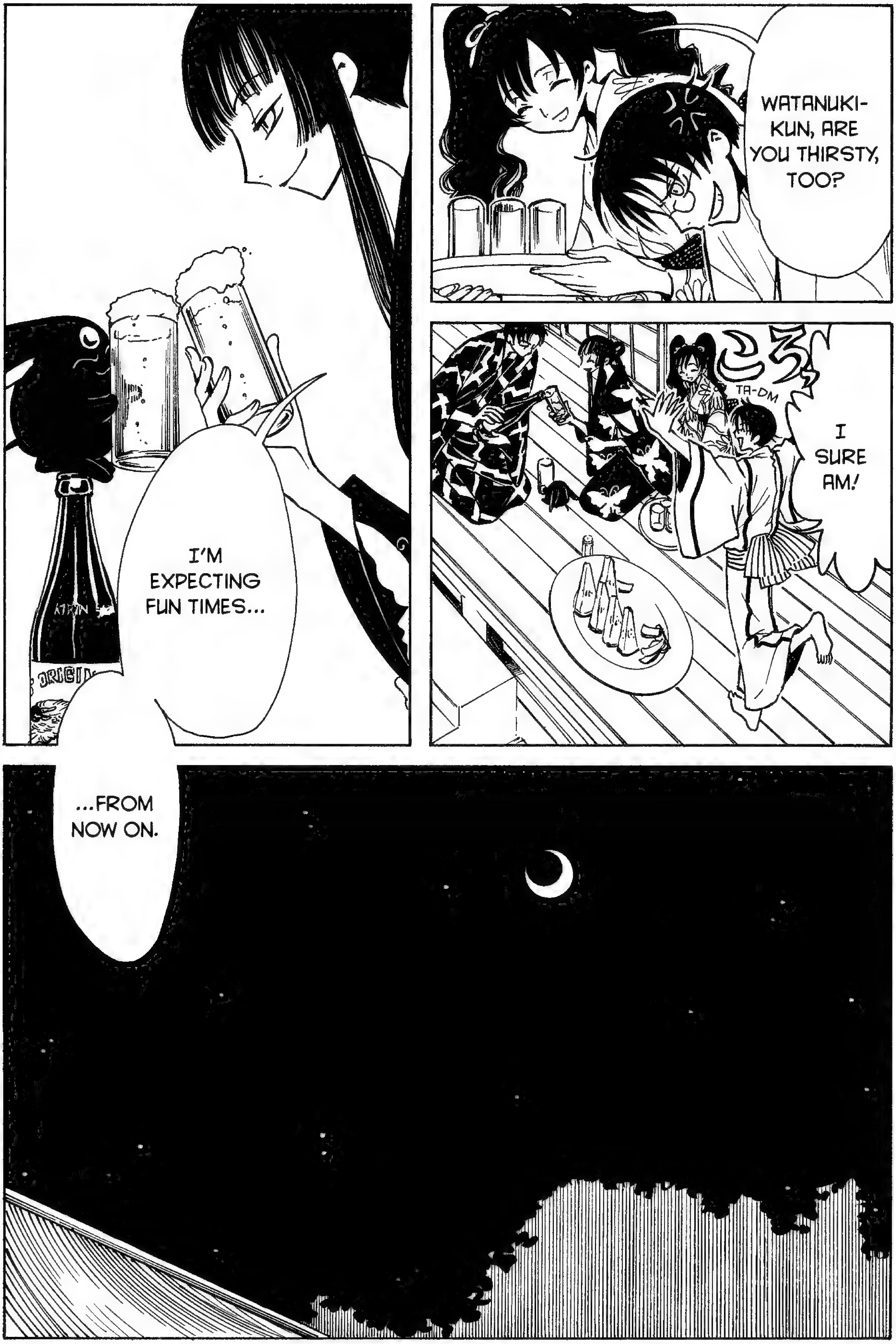

SHP
IT WAS "CHI."
CHI?
DÔMEKI-KUN HAS THE ABILITY TO EXORCISE DEMONIC OR EVIL FORCES AND KEEP THEM AWAY
REALLY?
HMM.
I HAVEN'T TRAINED FOR IT OR ANYTHING.
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
IT'S A LATENT PSYCHIC POWER.
YOU DON'T CONTROL IT WITH YOUR WILL.
ふむ
HMM.
THAT WOULD FOLLOW.
A LONG TIME AGO, MY GRANDFATHER ALWAYS USED TO EXORCISE EVIL SPIRITS.
MY FATHER TRIED TOO, BUT HE ALWAYS FAILED.
REALLY?
THAT'S TERRIFIC, DÔMEKI-KUN!
GRR


I'LL GET US SOME DRINKS.
IS TEA ALL RIGHT WITH EVERYONE?
YES...
BUT IF YOU COULD...
I WANT BEER!!
BEER, HUH? ビールね
I'LL HELP!
SURE. おう
HIMAWARI-CHAN!!
NOOOO!
IT SEEMS THAT DÔMEKI-KUN'S POWER IS PASSED DOWN THROUGH HIS FAMILY.
JUST LIKE YOURS! ♥
くす くす
I'D RATHER NOT BE COMPARED TO HIM!
BUT WE WERE TELLING GHOST STORIES WITH A CORPSE RIGHT NEXT DOOR, BUT BECAUSE DÔMEKI-KUN WAS THERE, YOU DIDN'T SEE ANY SPIRITS.
WELL, WE HAD THEM WHIPPED INTO SUCH A FRENZY, EVEN DÔMEKI-KUN COULDN'T HOLD THEM OFF.
EVEN WITH THAT, HE STILL MAKES ME MAD!
THAT...
...IS PROBABLY THE SAME EMOTION AS THOSE SPIRITS THAT ARE SO EAGER TO HAUNT YOU.


AH?
I TOLD YOU, TONIGHT ALL THE PLAYERS WERE PRESENT.
A CORPSE, THE BASIS OF SPIRITS.
ONE WHO SEES AND DRAWS SPIRITS TO HIM.
AND ONE WHO CAN EXORCISE THEM.
WE DID IT WITH THE HUNDRED GHOST STORY CEREMONY, BUT EVEN IN THE FUTURE, IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH SPIRITS, YOU CAN BRING THEM TO DÔMEKI-KUN.
I TOLD YOU TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH HIM.
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
I DON'T WANNA!
ONE LOOK AT HIM, AND I GET ANGRY!

WHAT I'M SAYING...
...IS IF THE TWO OF YOU GOT TOGETHER, SPIRITS COULD BE EXORCISED...
...EVERY SPIRIT YOU ATTRACT TO YOU COULD BE EXORCISED.
BUT YOUR CONSTANT FIGHTS WITH DÔMEKI ARE PREVENTING THAT.
むむ MM MM
E–
むむ MM MM
むむ MMM MM
EVEN IF YOU'RE RIGHT...
む
...IT'S STILL HUMILIATING FOR DÔMEKI TO EXORCISE MY GHOSTS!
I DON'T WANNA! I JUST DON'T WANNA!
しゃくしゃくしゃくしゃく
CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP


THEN...
...WHAT ABOUT HIMAWARI-CHAN?
はっ
GASP
WHEN YOU SAID, "ALL THE PLAYERS," HIMAWARI-CHAN WAS ONE OF THEM...
THAT YOUNG WOMAN IS...
I SENSE *BEER* CLOSE BY!! ♥
SKREECH
IT'S KIRIN BEER.
THE *BEST!!*
MOKONA WILL HAVE ONE, TOO!!


WATANUKI-KUN, ARE YOU THIRSTY, TOO?
ころっ
TA-DM
I SURE AM!
KIRIN
I'M EXPECTING FUN TIMES...
...FROM NOW ON.

Past Works

CLAMP have created many series. Here is a brief overview of one of them.

Magic Knight Rayearth

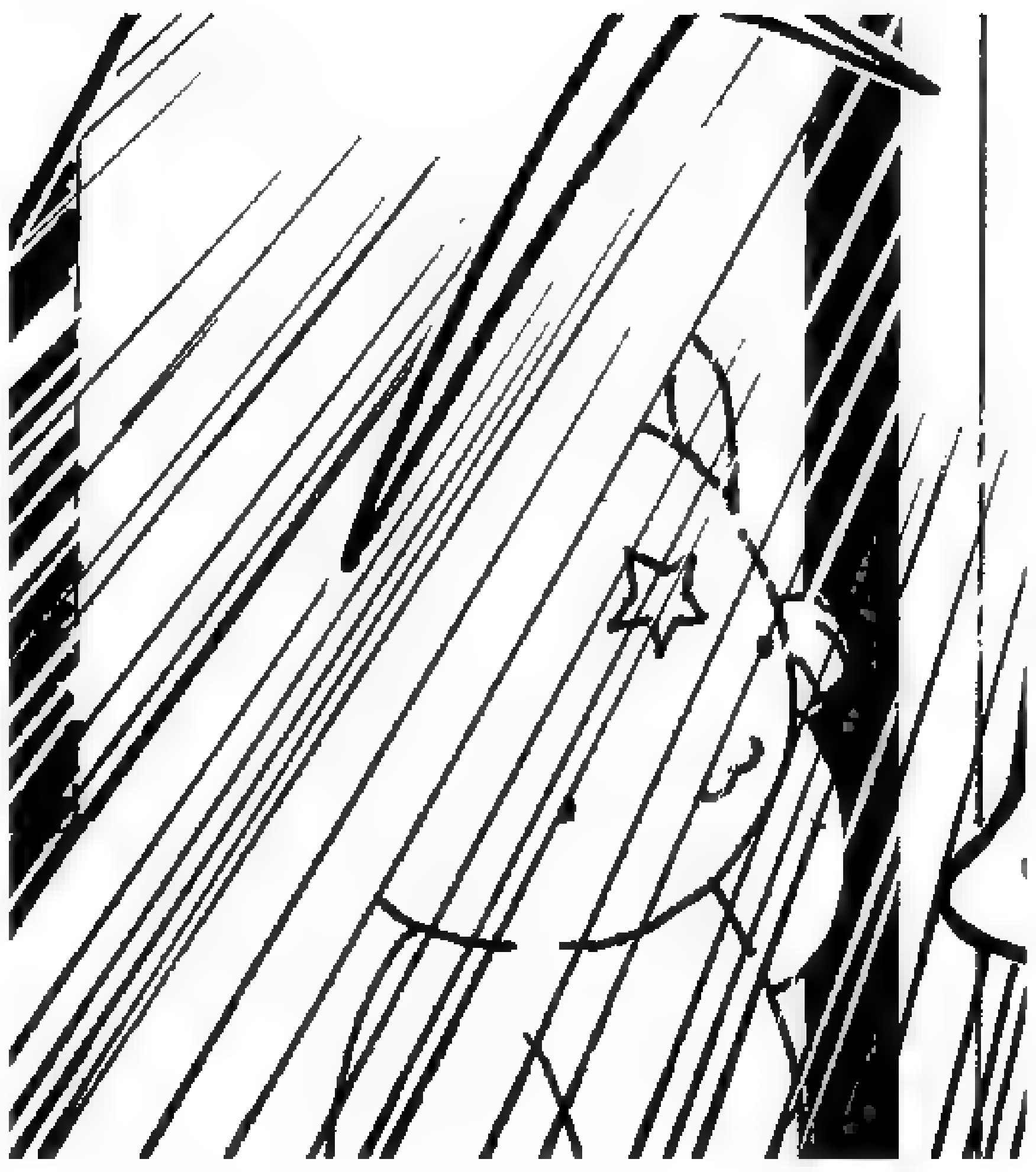
Hikaru, Umi, and Fuu never dreamed their field trip would end up in another dimension, but that's exactly what happens to the trio of middle school students from different schools. After hearing a voice calling to them in the Tokyo Tower, the three are shocked as the floor mysteriously opens up—and sucks them into the magical land called Cephiro. The girls learn they are its last line of defense against an evil priest, Zagato, seeking to enslave and reshape the land in his image.

Hikaru, Umi, and Fuu were summoned by the imprisoned Princess Emeraude, Cephiro's Pillar, who has kept their land peaceful. They are told by the mysterious Clef that the world was shaped by Emeraude's vision and thoughts, but since she's been trapped a darkness threatens the land. The trio are told the only way to return to Earth is to become the Magic Knights of legend and help save this universe.

After being given Mokona as an apparent mascot, each gets a portion of power from an elemental. Hikaru is one with fire, Umi has a link to water, and Fuu has ties to the wind. As the girls learn more and use their newfound powers, they will grow stronger. The trio are now on a quest to find the other elements necessary to aid in the rescue of Emeraude, but it's not an easy journey. There are evil forces seeking to destroy the potential Knights. Against almost impossible odds and facing bodily harm and danger, the freshman Knights attempt to save Cephiro and return home to the lives each left behind.

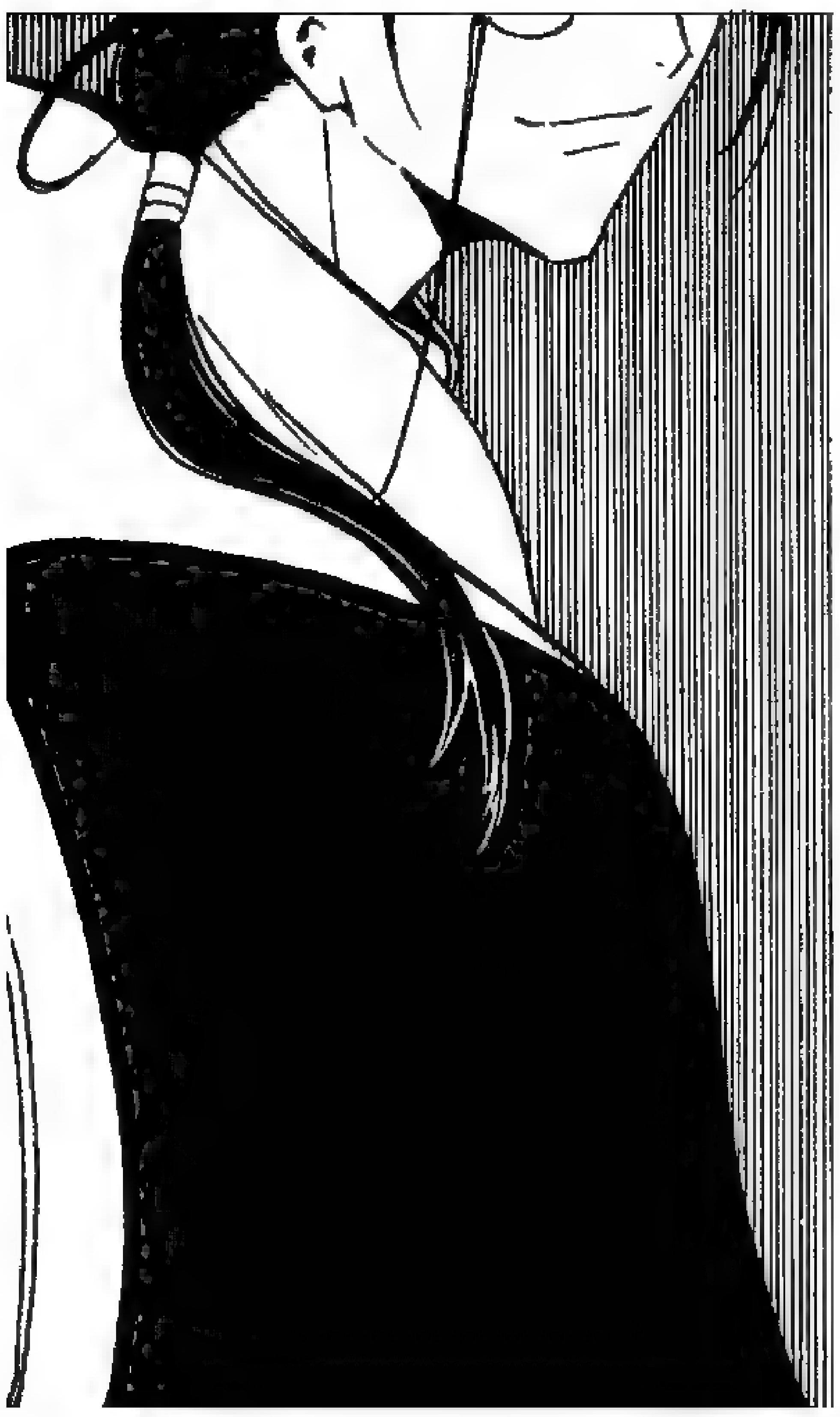
Artifacts and Miscellany

Over in *Tsubasa* you'll find a lot of characters from a variety of CLAMP manga making an appearance. Here in the second volume of *xxxHOLiC*, you'll find a few artifacts and other appearances that might be a bit hard to understand if you haven't read all of CLAMP's work. Don't read this section if you haven't read this volume yet—there's a reason we put this information at the end of the book!



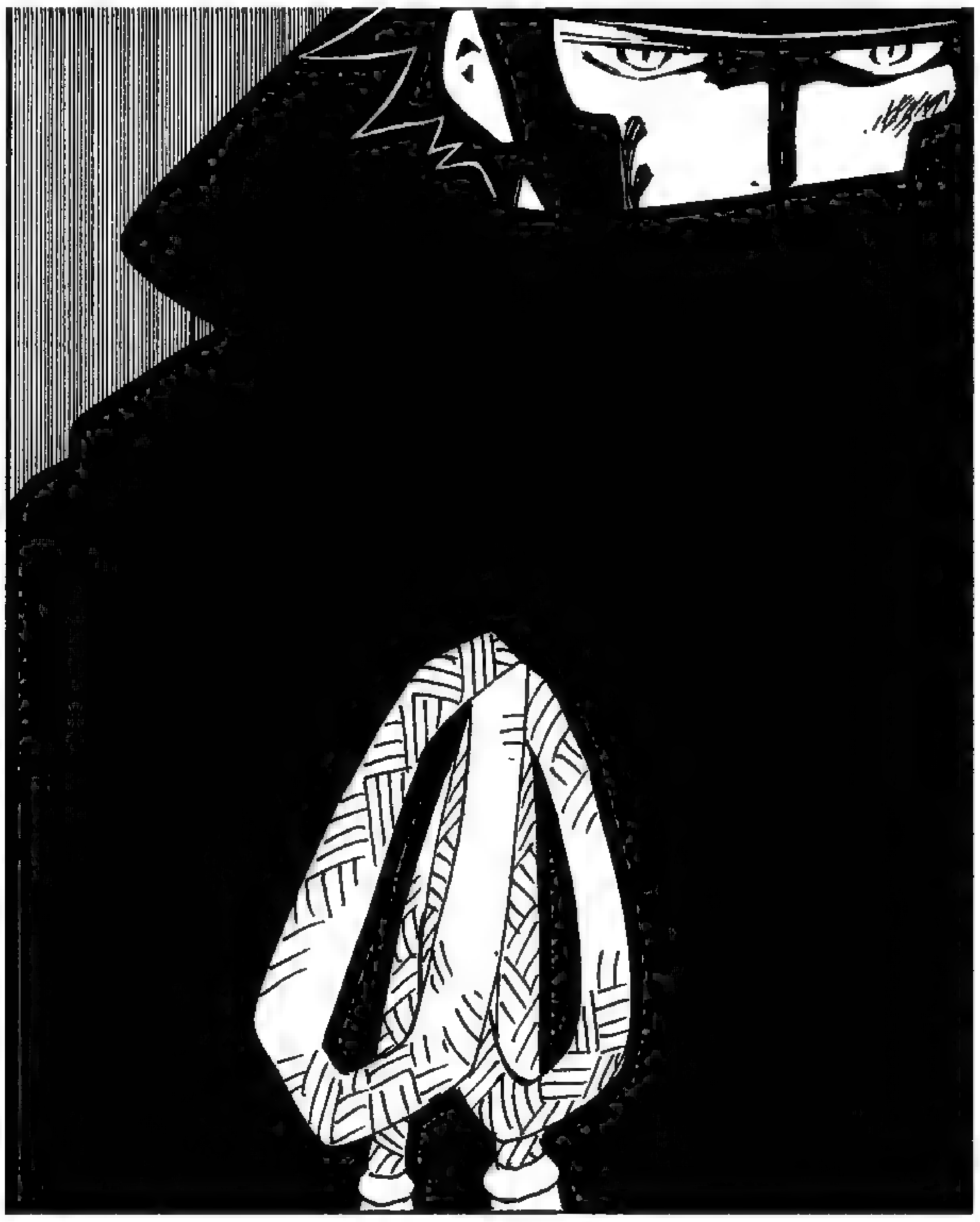
Kero

The one *Cardcaptor Sakura* character most conspicuously absent from *Tsubasa* is Kero, the plush animal-like Guardian Beast that advises the CS Sakura. This stuffed animal in the back room of Yûko's shop looks suspiciously like Kero. Is it just a pleasant surprise for the reader, or is it a hint at what's to come?



Clow Reed

Referenced in *xxxHOLiC* Volume 1, Clow Reed makes his first (partial) appearance in *xxxHOLiC* Volume 2. Clow Reed was the creator of the Clow Cards, the Cardcaptor wand, and of the guardians Kero/Cerberus and Yue. In conjunction with Yûko, Clow Reed also created the Mokonas.



Kurogane

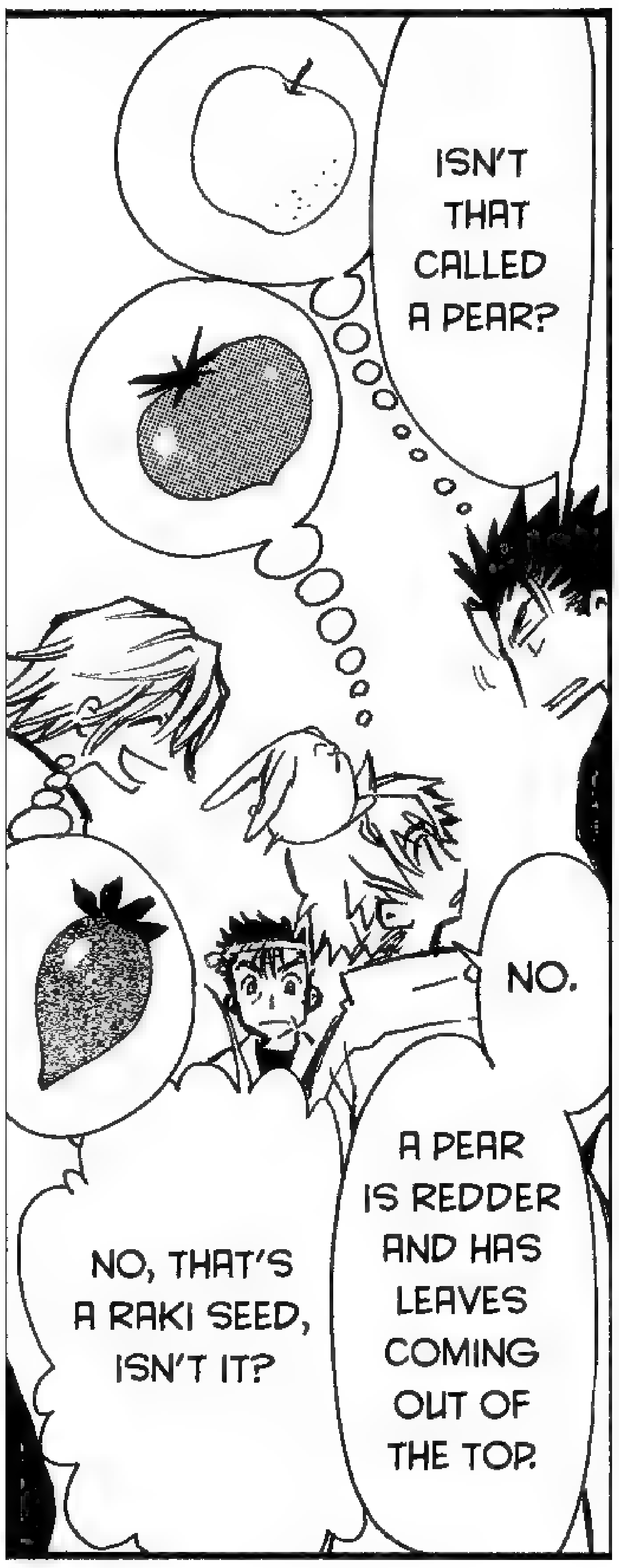
You can learn a lot more about Kurogane over in *Tsubasa*, but here's the thumbnail version:
A warrior ninja who fights in the service of Princess Tomoyo, Kurogane is quick-tempered, violent, arrogant, and unrestrained. In an effort to teach him humility and, perhaps, empathy, Tomoyo has sent him to visit Yûko, the space-time witch. Like Fai and Syaoran, Kurogane has a wish: to return home.

Fai D. Florite

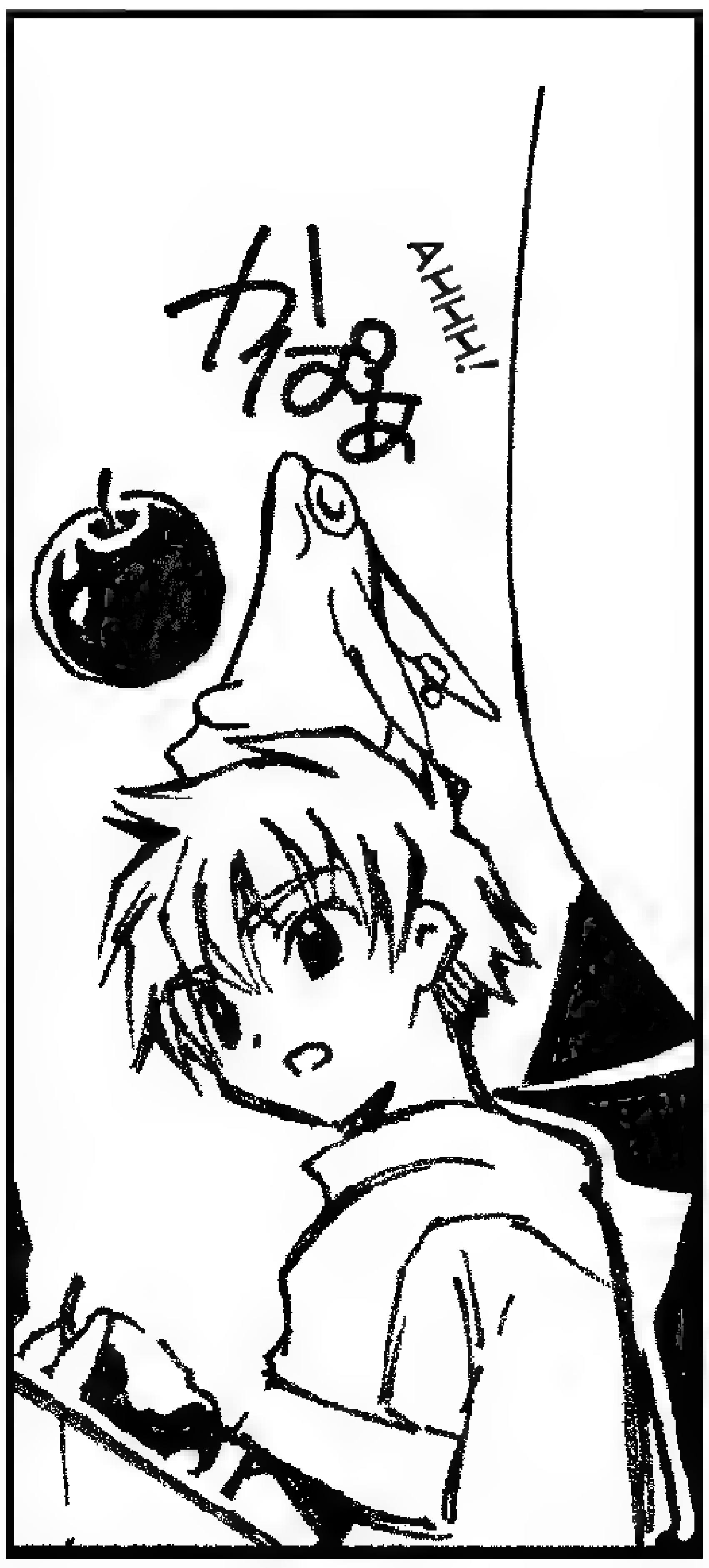
Again, you'll learn a lot more about Fai by reading his story in *Tsubasa*. Fai is himself a wizard in his land of Celes. When we first meet him in *Tsubasa*, he appears to have just completed a battle with Prince Ashura. Whether he won or lost that battle is unclear. Leaving his beloved creation Chi behind to guard against Ashura's return, Fai seeks Yûko to grant a wish directly opposite to Kurogane's: to journey without being forced to return home.

The Apple

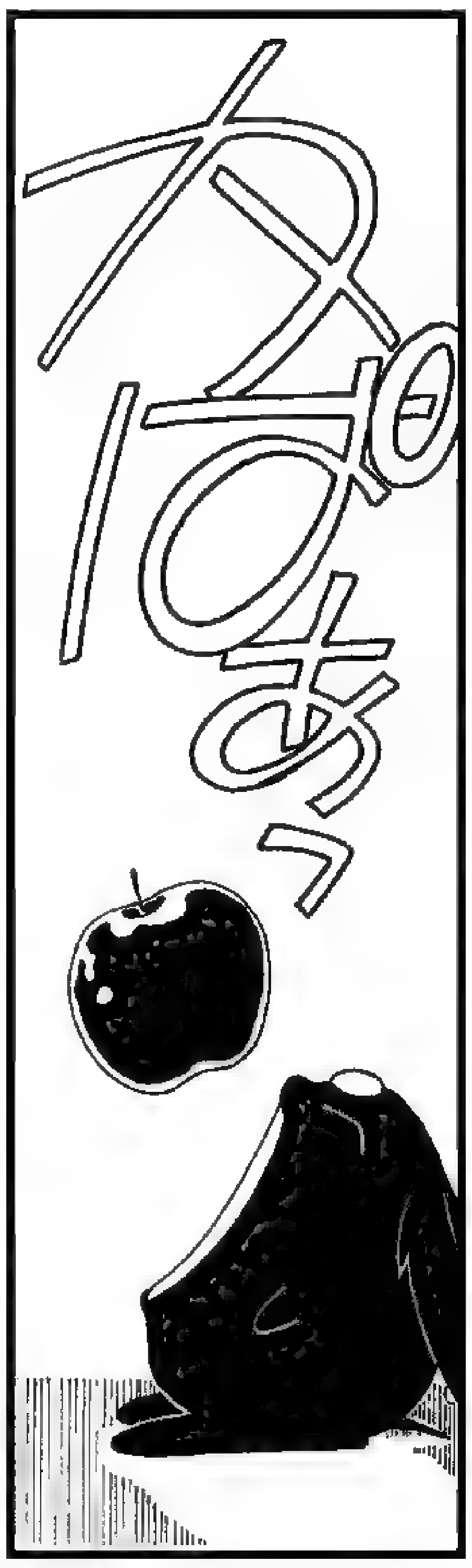
Ah, now here's where it starts to get fun. Over in *Tsubasa*, Syaoran and his traveling companions are exploring the world of Hanshin. In the marketplace, they find an apple. Since each person comes from a different dimension, each has a different expectation of what an apple should look like. Mokona insists that they buy the apple, and that would seem to be the end of it.


ISN'T THAT CALLED A PEAR?
NO.
A PEAR IS REDDER AND HAS LEAVES COMING OUT OF THE TOP.
NO, THAT'S A RAKI SEED, ISN'T IT?

But if you're paying close attention, you'll notice Mokona-White gulping the apple down . . .

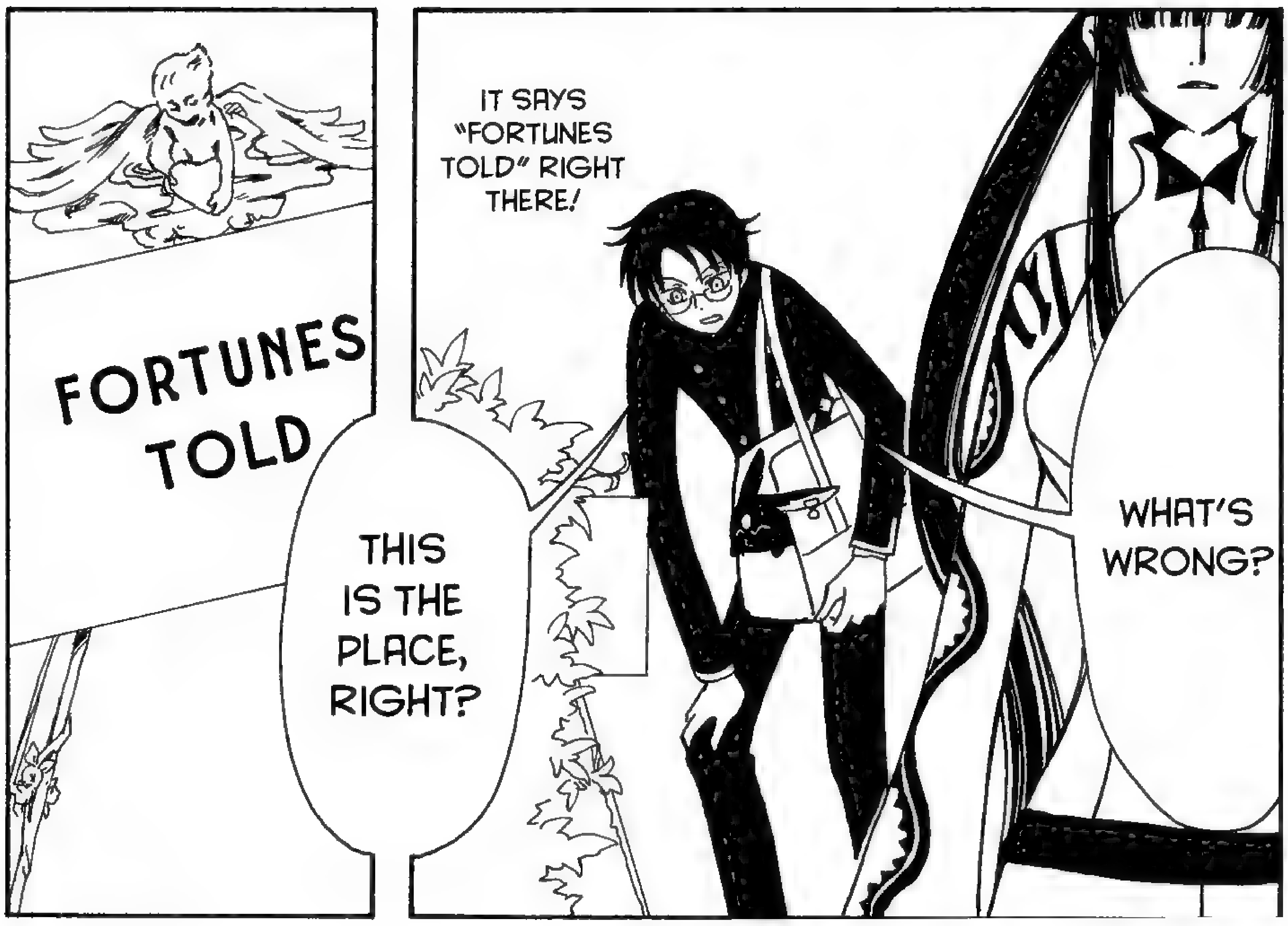


. . . and Mokona-Black choking it right back up! A little disgusting, perhaps, but fun nonetheless.



Uranai: Fortune-telling in Japan

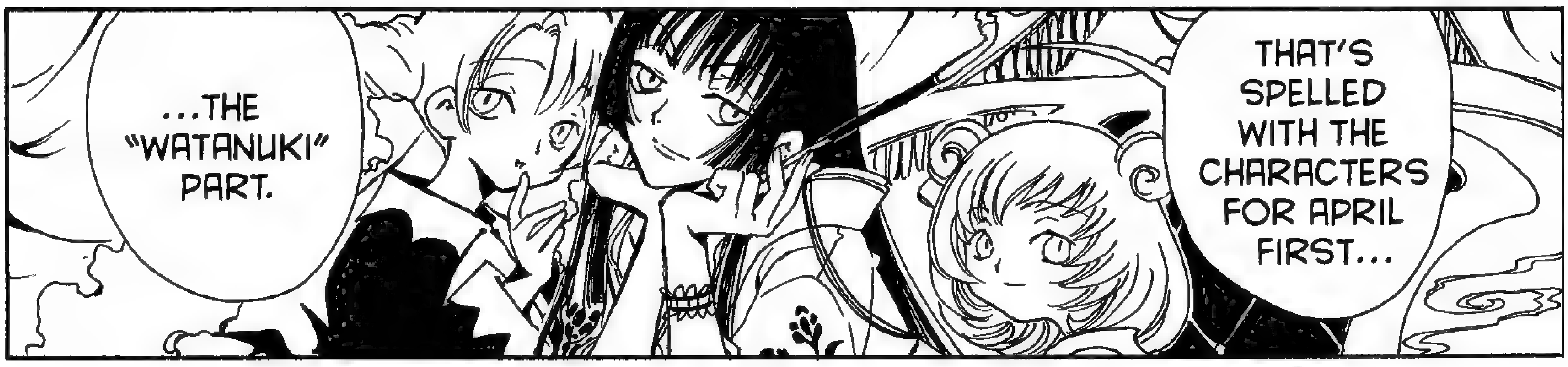
On almost every street in Japan there are signs for one form or another of fortune-telling—they're as common as McDonald's signs are in Western circles. The Japanese believe fortune-telling is a very important part of daily life, and the general term for fortune-telling in Japan is *uranai*. In modern American society, fortune-telling usually consists of a few major areas: psychic reading, palmistry, zodiac astrology, and tarot. There are other areas, but those four categories comprise probably 85% or more of the paid fortune-telling in America. Japanese *uranai* makes use of those four, but the variety of other styles is much, much wider. Throw in Chinese astrology, the Tantric-based 27-constellation astrology, blood-type analysis, various versions of numerology, and *uranai* based on the *kanji* characters in your name, and that's only scratching the surface. Japan also embraces *uranai* more than America—walk down any downtown street in Tokyo and you will find some woman with a table and a sign in a darkened corner of the sidewalk. If she's good, she'll have customers lining up all night long.


WHAT'S WRONG?
IT SAYS "FORTUNES TOLD" RIGHT THERE!
THIS IS THE PLACE, RIGHT?
FORTUNES TOLD

Some people won't even make any important decisions without first consulting some type of fortune-teller. There are three main types practiced in Japan: Omikuji, Seimeihandan, and Teso.

Omikuji is arguably the most popular. It's comparable to the use of Chinese fortune cookies. Many people go to shrines to purchase Omikuji to learn about the upcoming year. You get Omikuji by picking a piece of wood with a number on it. The number is exchanged for the slip of paper containing either good or bad luck. If it's good luck, the next year looks great! If it's bad luck, you can dispel it by visiting a shrine and tying the slip of paper to a tree there.

Seimeihandan means divination. It's the practice of using a person's name to determine his or her future, and it was used by Yûko to determine Watanuki's future in *xxxHOLiC* Volume 1. Many Japanese believe a person's name will decide what type of life he or she has. Fortune-tellers count the strokes in the kanji of a client's name and use that information to give advice and news.


THAT'S SPELLED WITH THE CHARACTERS FOR APRIL FIRST...
...THE "WATANUKI" PART.

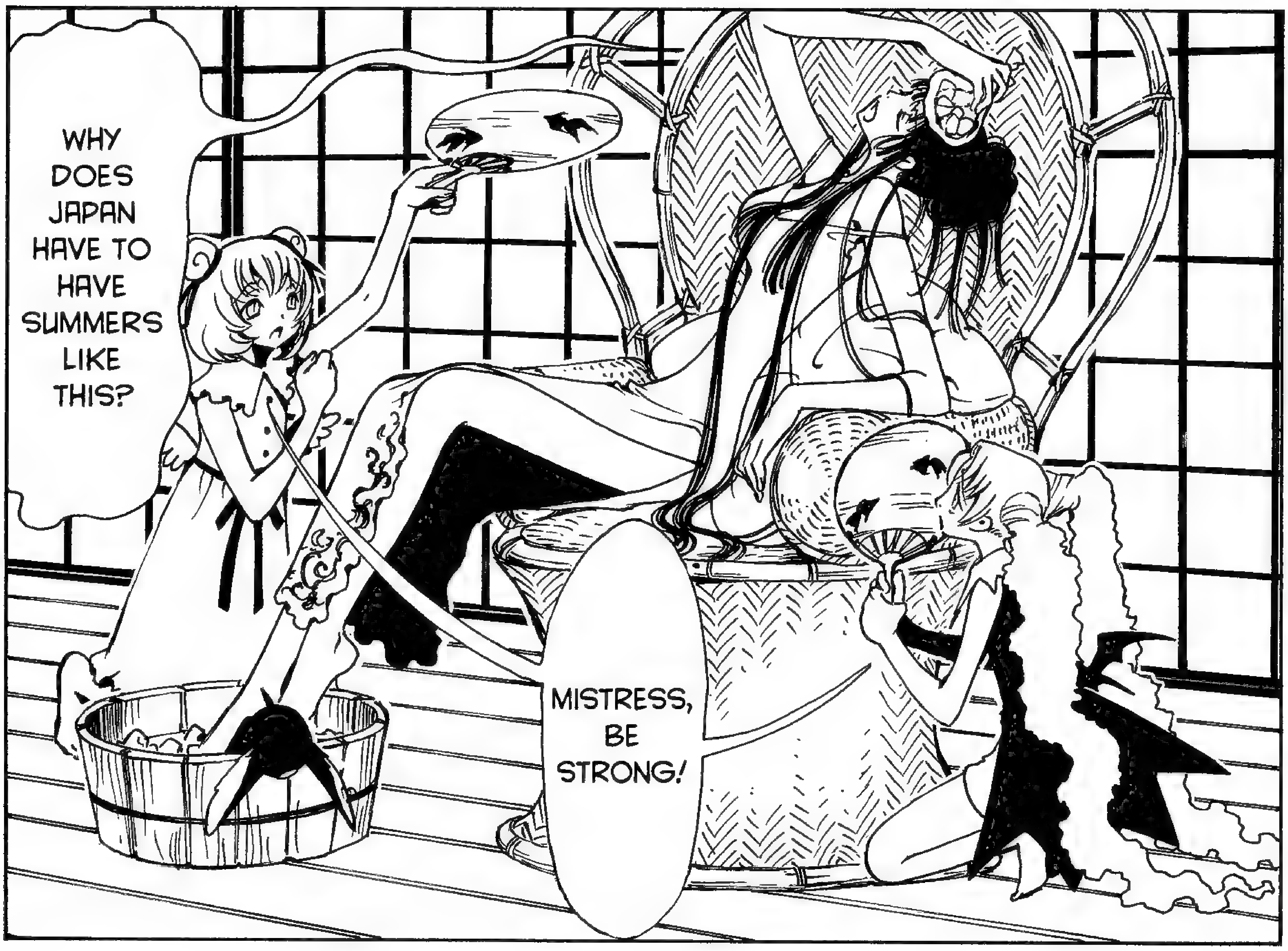
Teso is the common palm-reading that most Western people are familiar with. A fortune-teller will examine the lines on a person's palm and use that as a basis for determining personality and the future. Everyone has unique lines, and each one has a different significance such as the love line, the life line, the heart line, etc. By examining all the lines together a lot can be learned.

Translation Notes

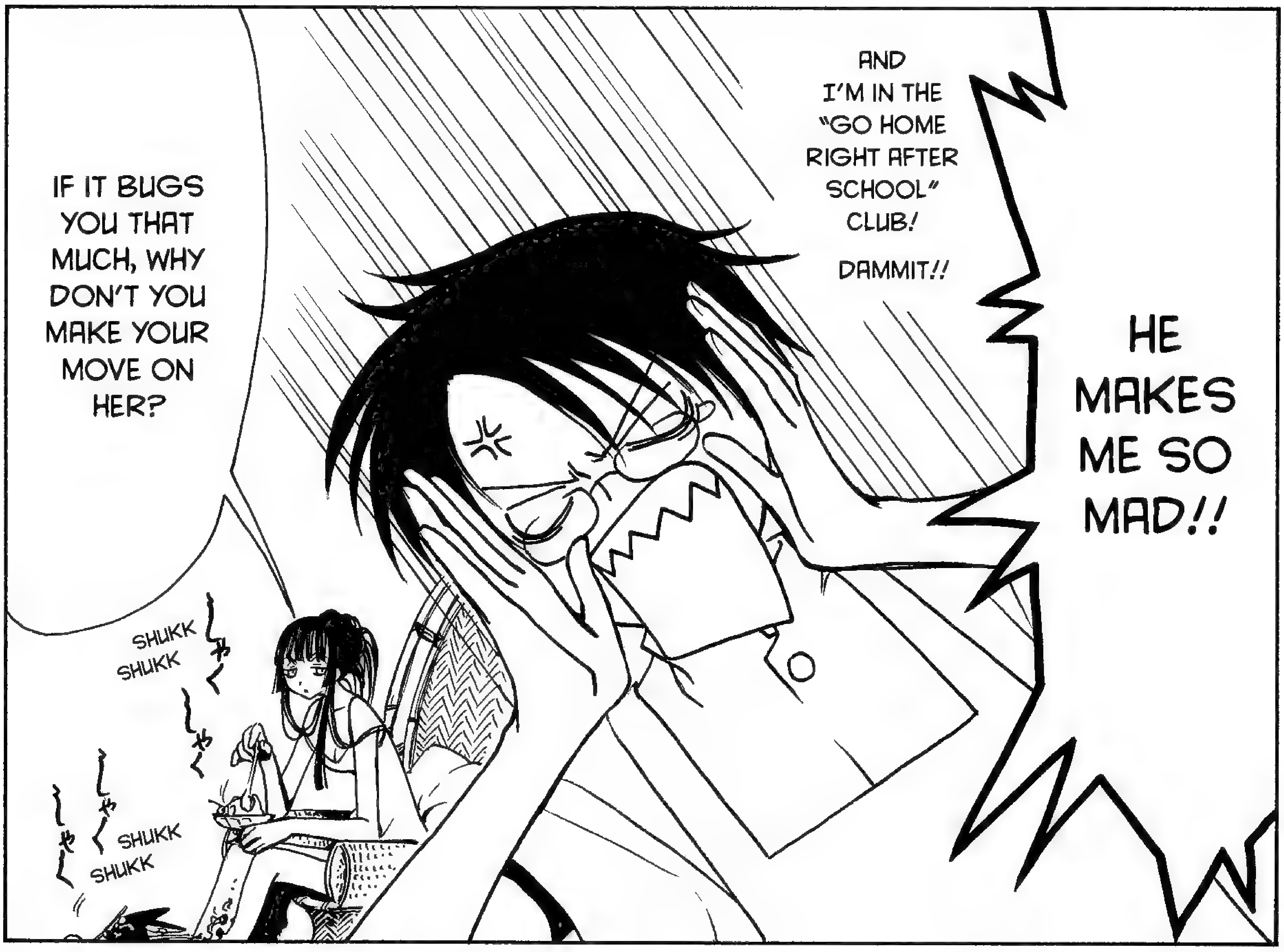
For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes to help you understand some of the cultural and story references from our translation of *xxxHOLiC*.

It's . . . so . . . hot!

In Japan, summer is the time for the dead (see below), a time for catching colds, and a time for complaining about how hot and sticky Tokyo is. With temperatures in the nineties and humidity nearing 100%, they have every right to complain. Some would say that with the technological advancements that come out of Japan, one should expect more air conditioners. But traditional-style homes are not built for this luxury, and the ever-traditional Yûko both swelters in her traditional home and, as per tradition, complains up a storm.


WHY DOES JAPAN HAVE TO HAVE SUMMERS LIKE THIS?
MISTRESS, BE STRONG!

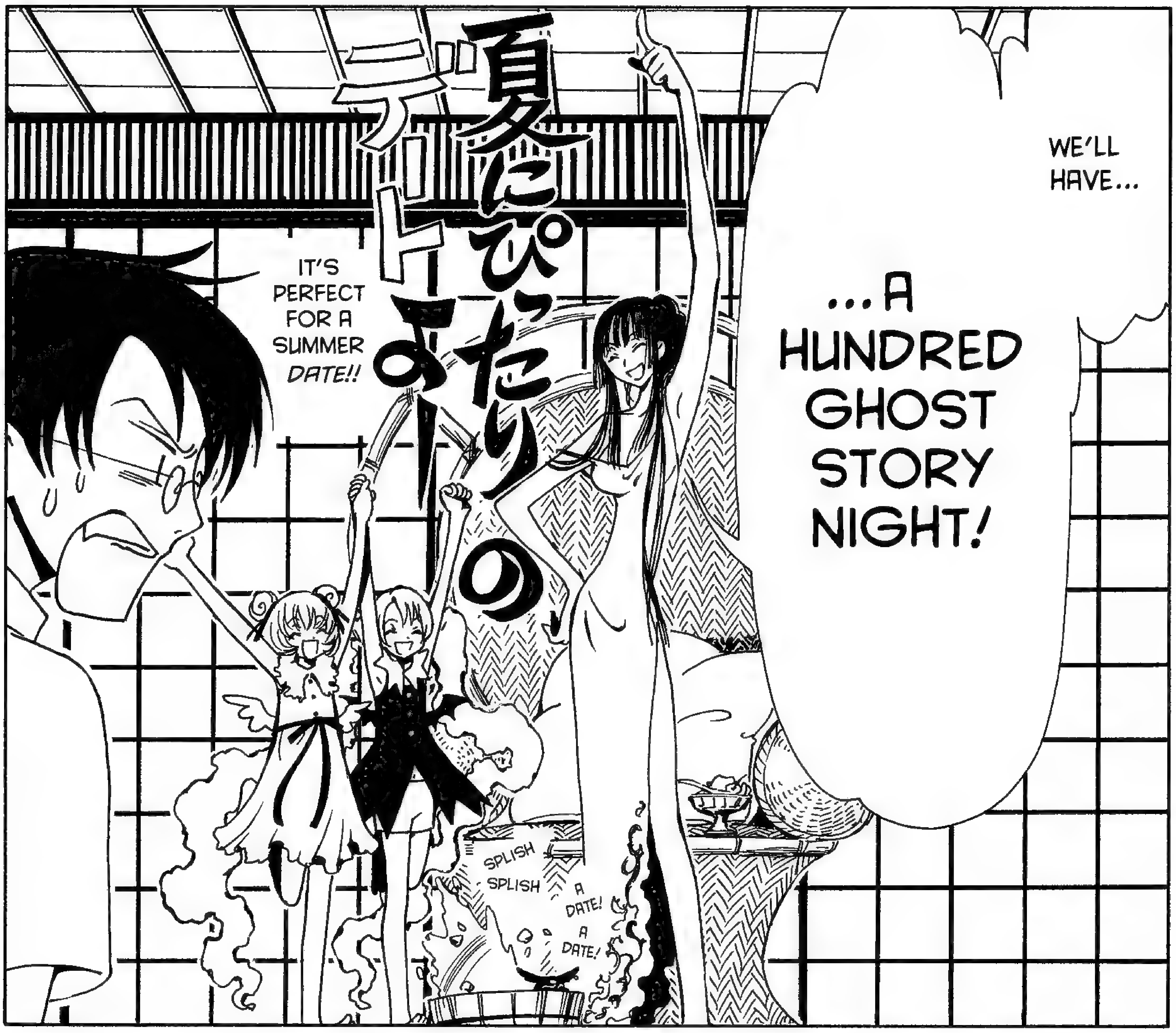
The "Go Home Right After School Club"


HE MAKES ME SO MAD!!
AND I'M IN THE "GO HOME RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL" CLUB! DAMMIT!!
IF IT BUGS YOU THAT MUCH, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOUR MOVE ON HER?
SHUKK SHUKK
SHUKK SHUKK

As you probably guessed, there is no official club called the "Go Home Right After School Club." It's just a name for the students who haven't joined clubs. But most Japanese students do belong to a club of some sort—mostly sports clubs or hobby clubs. The clubs are not only a way to explore a student's interests, but also provide a social group, contacts, and moral or psychological support for the student. Dômeki's Archery Club is considered one of the more elite clubs of any high school because of the skill and concentration needed. Of course, the most popular clubs for guys are the soccer and baseball clubs.

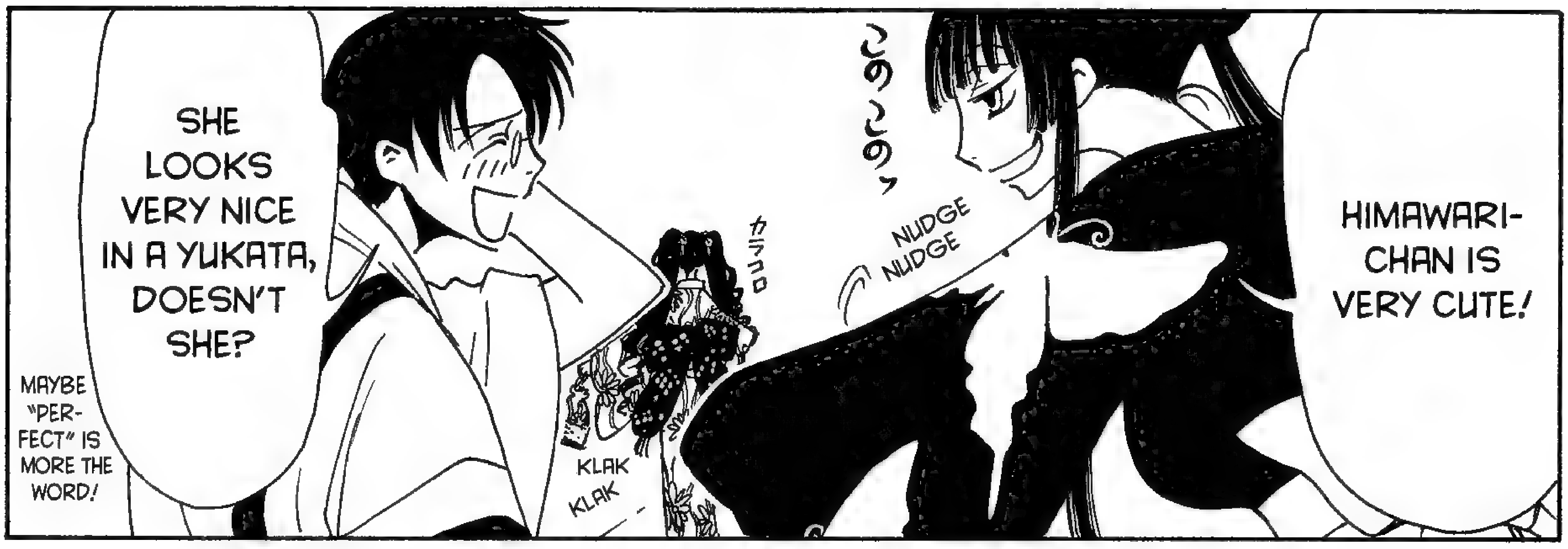
Ghost Stories in the Summer

America centers its ghost season around Halloween, and so the harvest has become connected, in North American minds, with ghosts and ghouls. In Japan, *O-bon,* the annual festival celebrating one's ancestors which usually takes place in August (the date can differ from temple to temple), has become the gateway for the dead—or at least frightening stories about them. After long centuries of *O-bon* tradition, high summer has become the season for ghosts.


WE'LL HAVE...
...A HUNDRED GHOST STORY NIGHT!
夏にぴったりの
デート
IT'S PERFECT FOR A SUMMER DATE!!
SPLISH SPLISH
A DATE! A DATE!

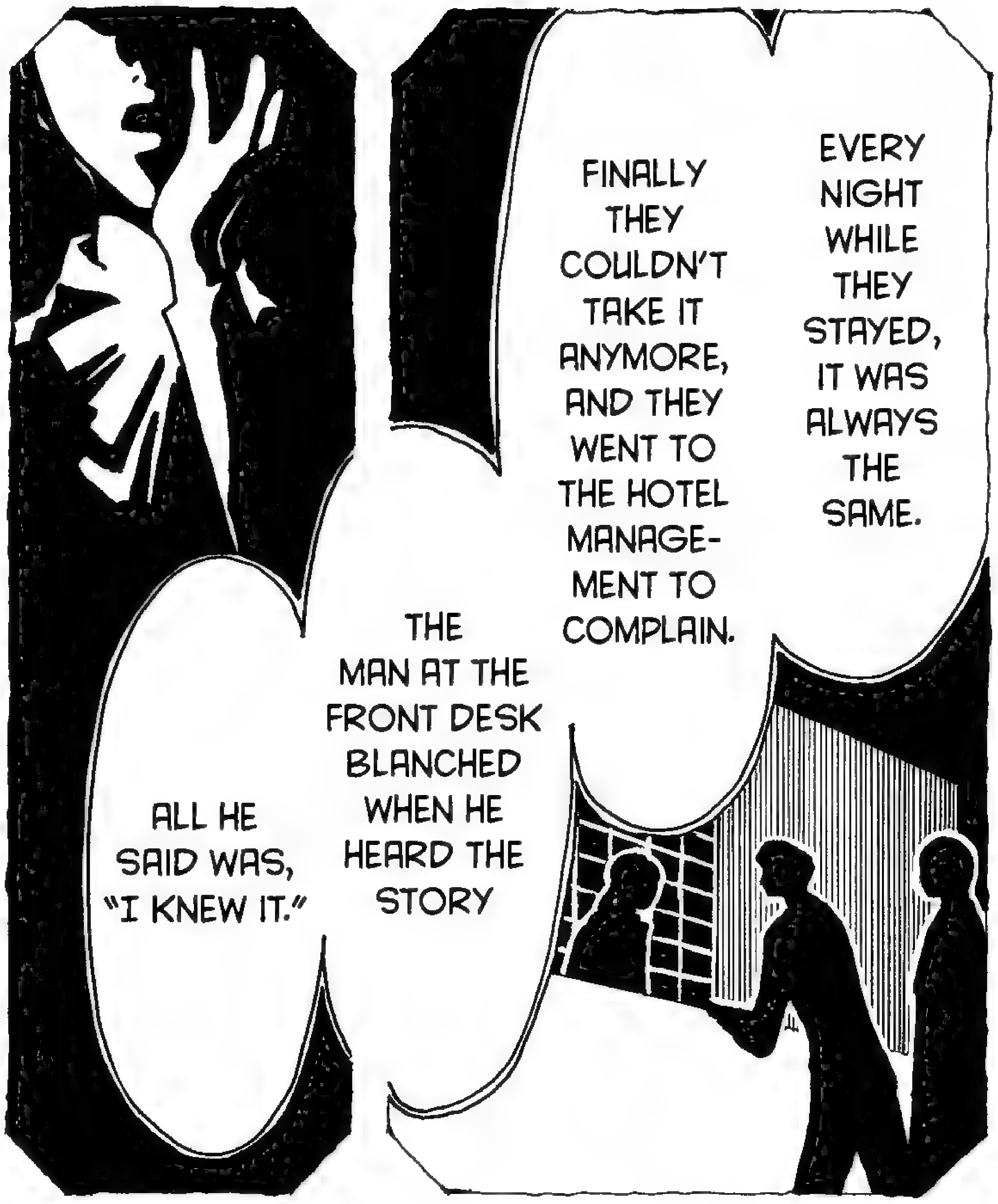
Yukata

Tokyo, in the summer, is hot and sticky (see above), and one of the practical and beautiful innovations that Japan developed for this very purpose is a light cotton kimono called a *yukata*. Inexpensive and exquisitely decorated with prints or embroidery, women's *yukata* are a delightful addition to festivals and ceremonies.


HIMAWARI-CHAN IS VERY CUTE!
NUDGE NUDGE
KLAK KLAK
SHE LOOKS VERY NICE IN A YUKATA, DOESN'T SHE?
MAYBE "PERFECT" IS MORE THE WORD!

Hotel Room

American hotels tend to have rooms on both sides of the hall. Older-style Japanese hotels and apartment blocks tend to have a hallway against one exterior wall, and all of the rooms lined up like blocks along it. That's why there was only one room off of the walled-off hallway in Himawari-chan's story.


EVERY NIGHT WHILE THEY STAYED, IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.
FINALLY THEY COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE, AND THEY WENT TO THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT TO COMPLAIN.
THE MAN AT THE FRONT DESK BLANCHED WHEN HE HEARD THE STORY
ALL HE SAID WAS, "I KNEW IT."

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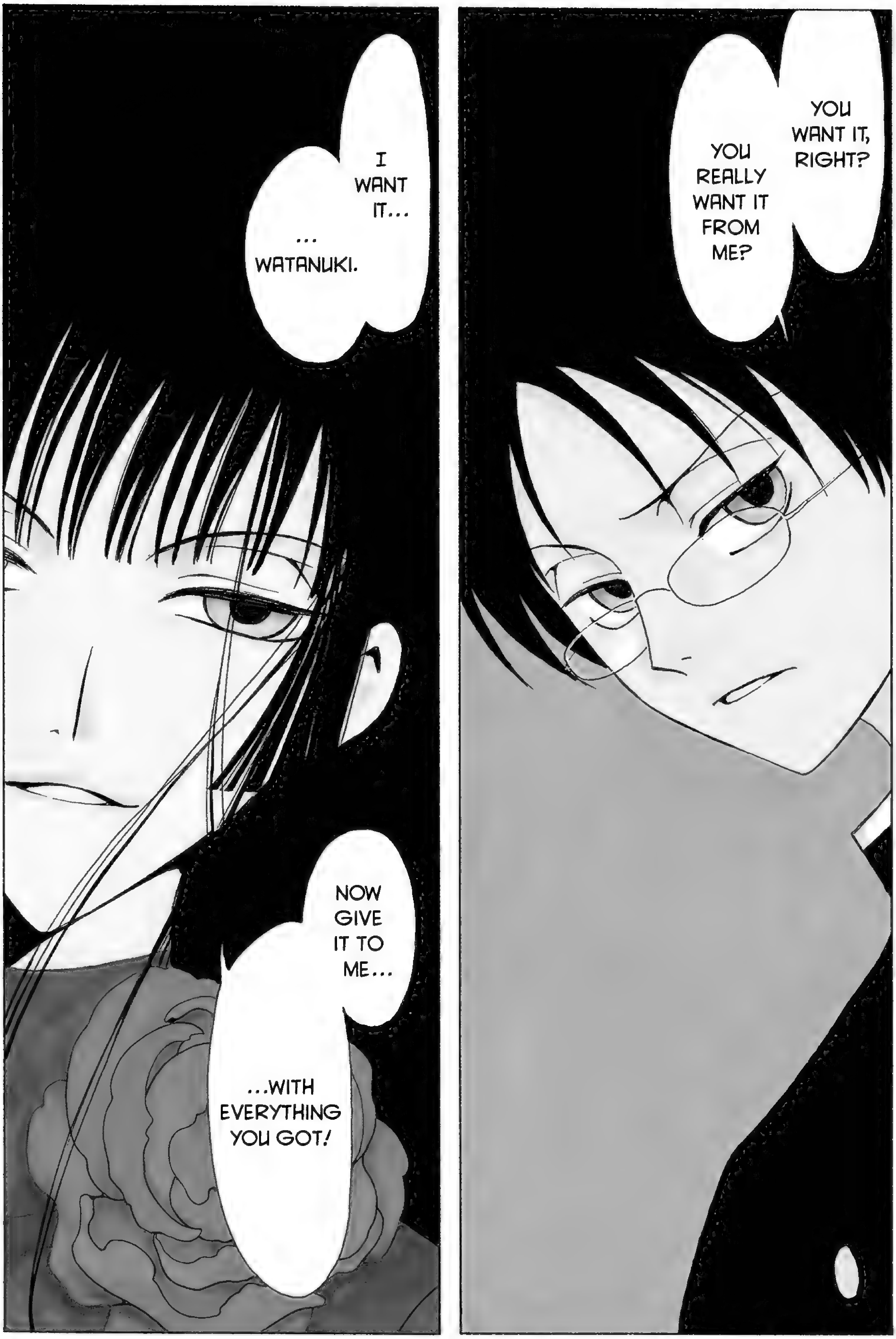
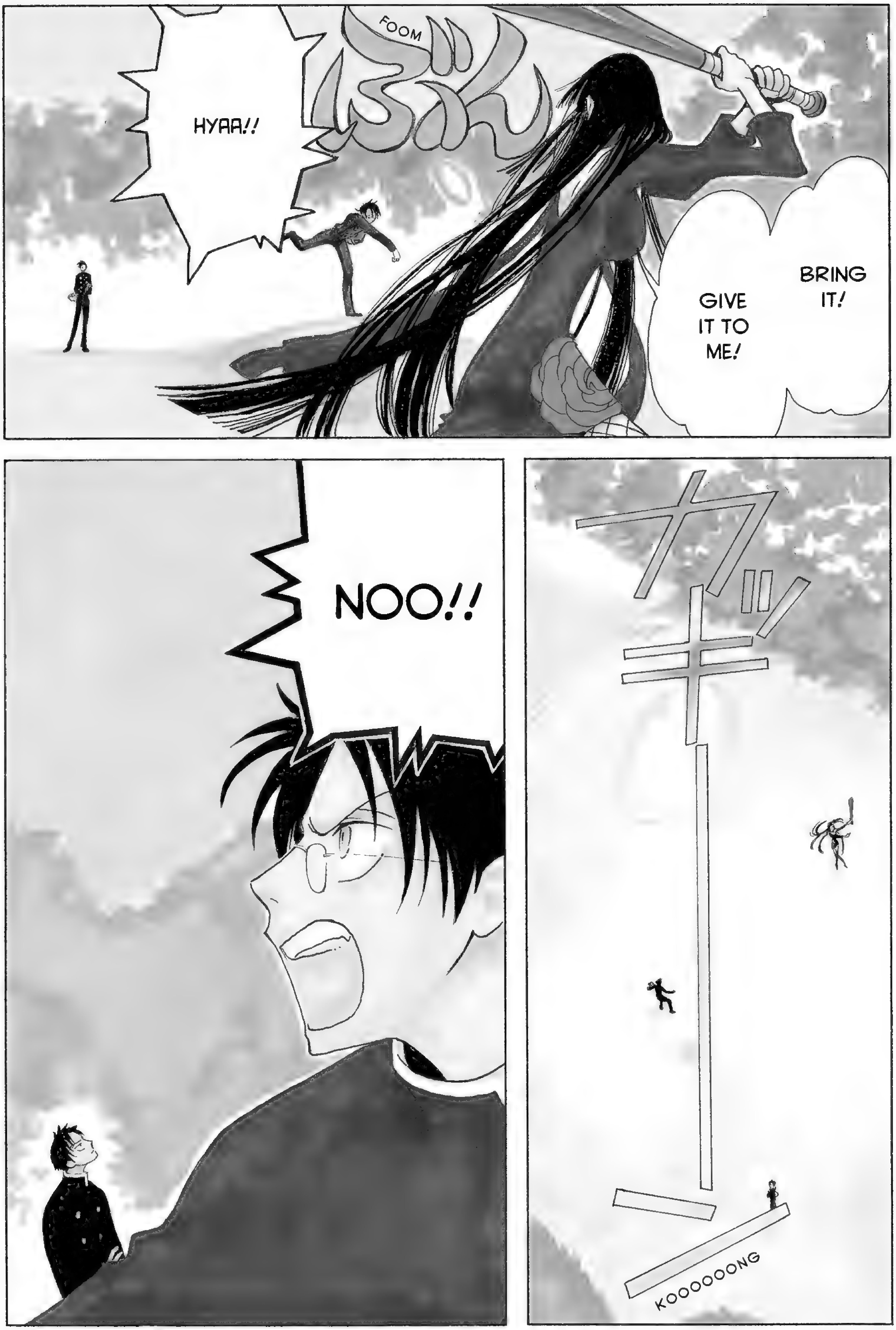
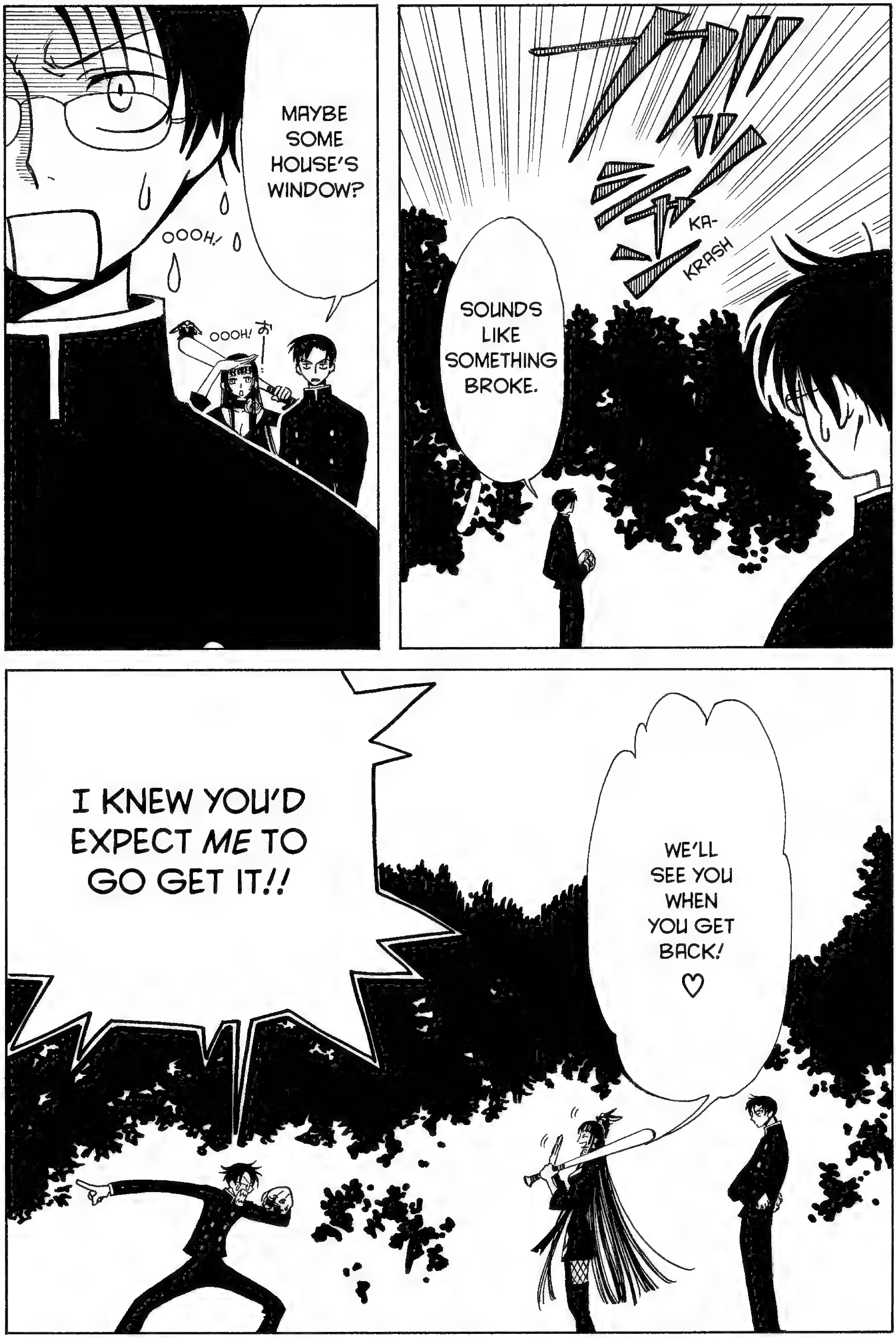
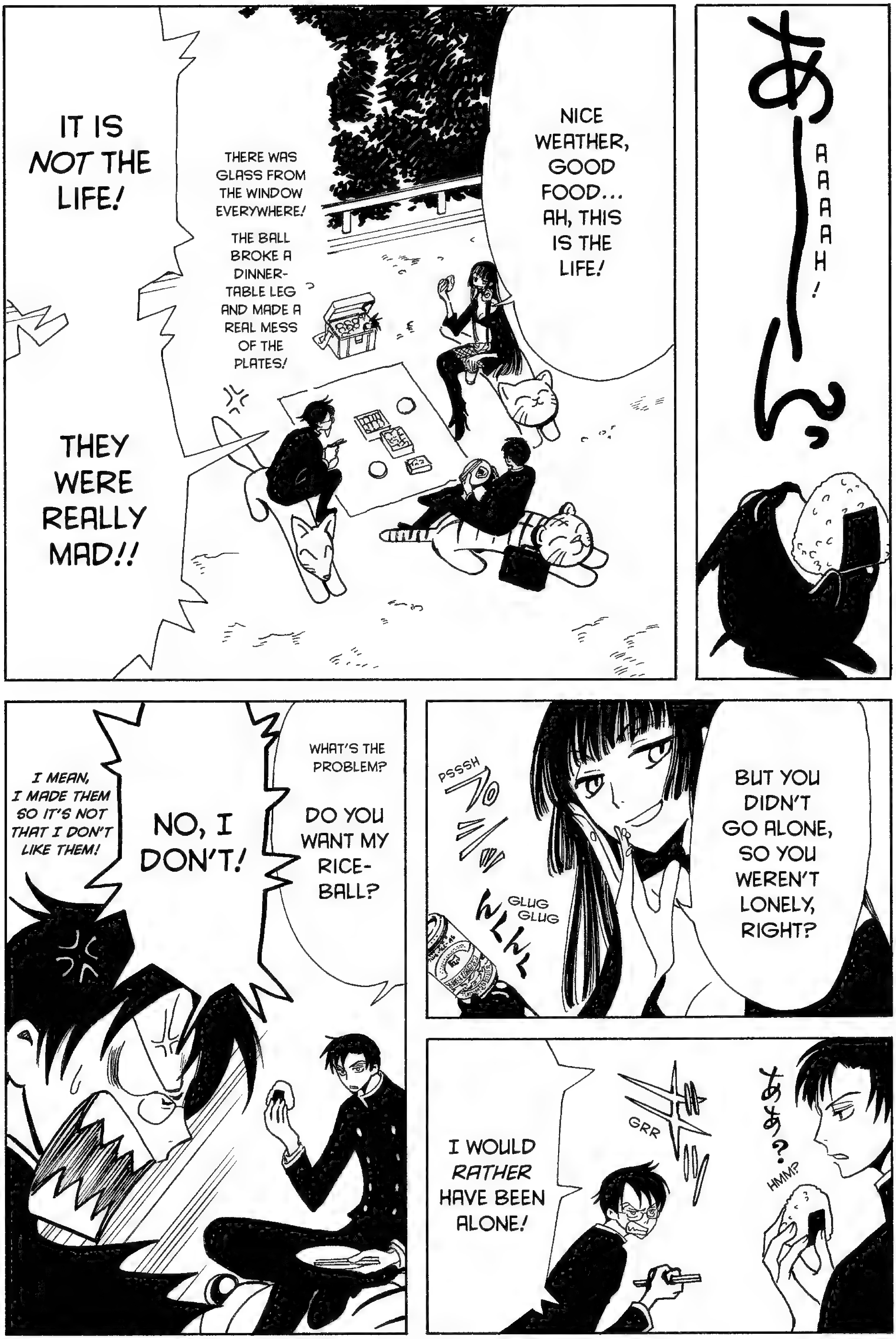
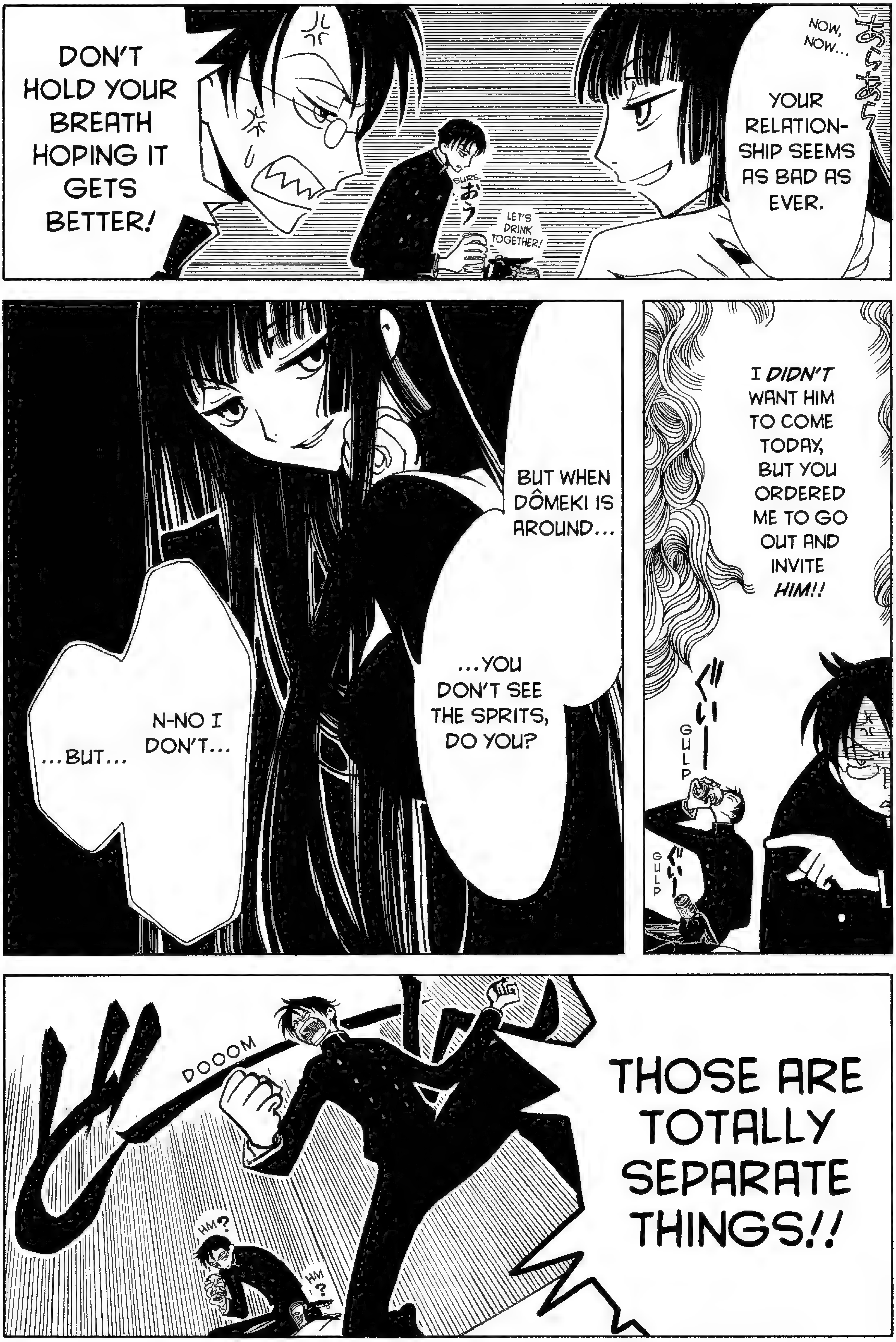

YOU WANT IT, RIGHT?
YOU REALLY WANT IT FROM ME?
I WANT IT...
...WATANUKI.
NOW GIVE IT TO ME...
...WITH EVERYTHING YOU GOT!

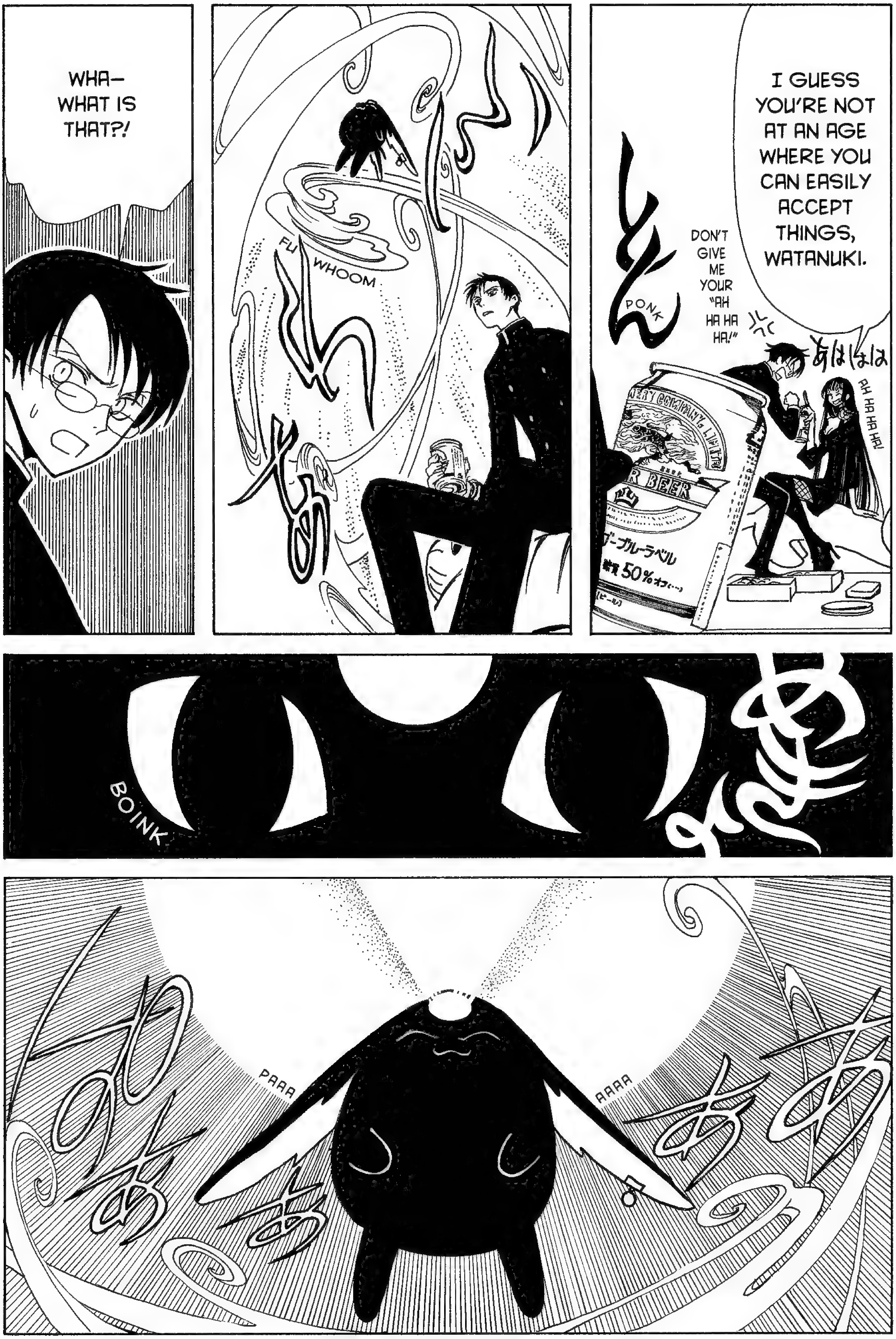
xxxHOLiC
ー×××ホリックー

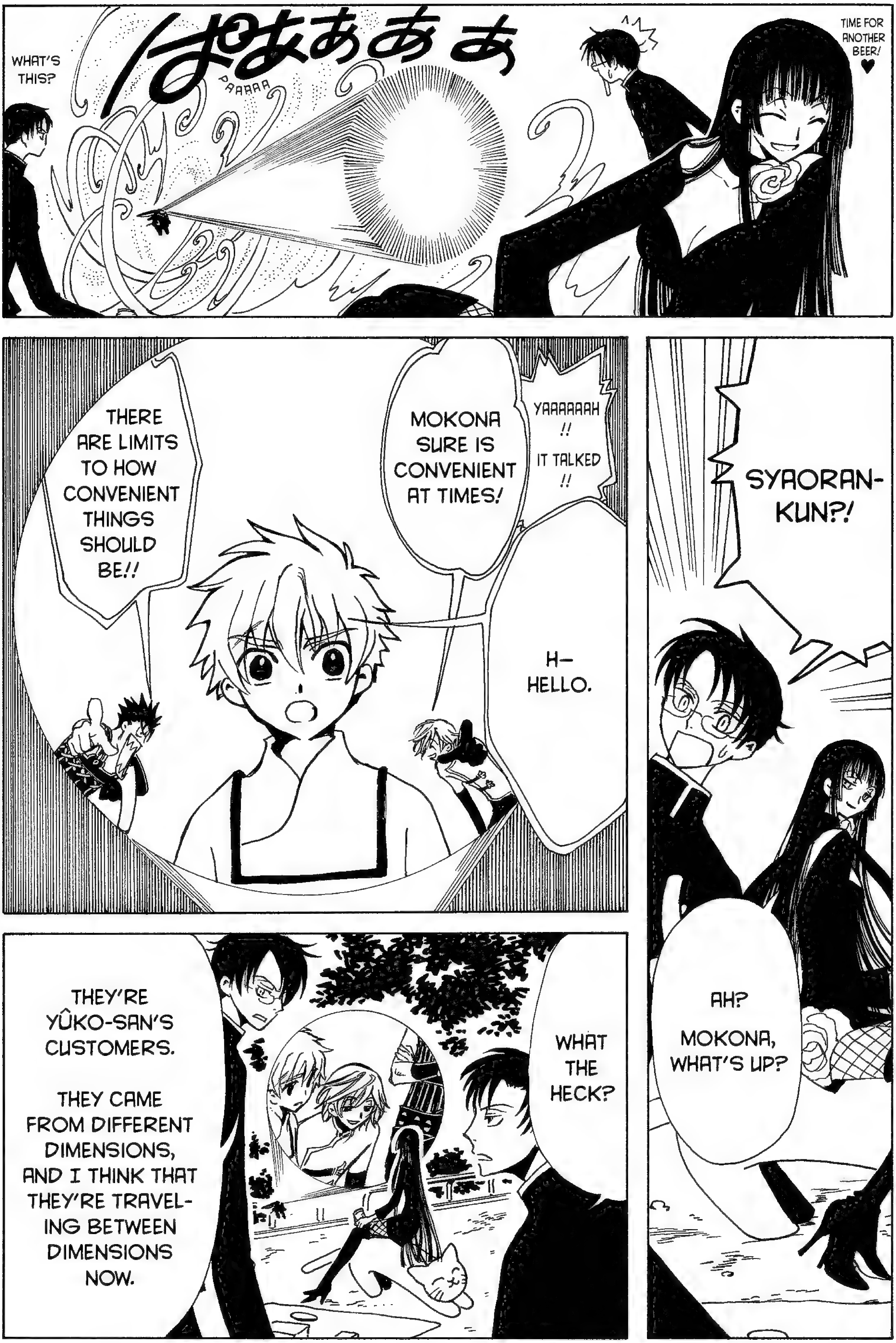

BRING IT! GIVE IT TO ME!
FOOM
ぶん
HYAA!!
カッキーン
KOOOOOONG
NOO!!

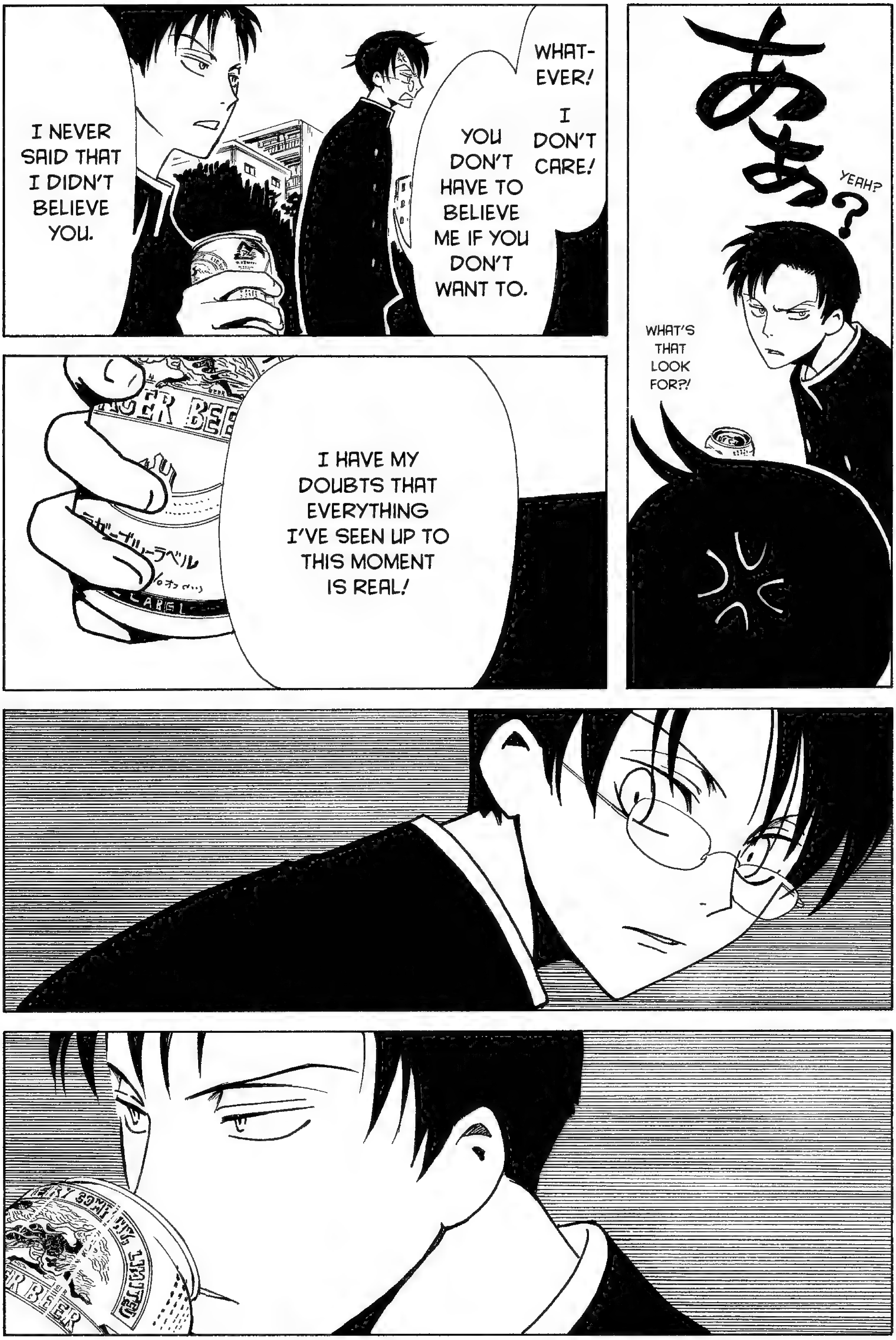

KA-
KRASH
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING BROKE.
MAYBE SOME HOUSE'S WINDOW?
OOOH!
OOOH! お—!
WE'LL SEE YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK! ♡
I KNEW YOU'D EXPECT *ME* TO GO GET IT!!


あーん?
AAAAH!
NICE WEATHER, GOOD FOOD... AH, THIS IS THE LIFE!
THERE WAS GLASS FROM THE WINDOW EVERYWHERE!
THE BALL BROKE A DINNER-TABLE LEG AND MADE A REAL MESS OF THE PLATES!
IT IS *NOT* THE LIFE!
THEY WERE REALLY MAD!!
PSSSH
んくんく
GLUG GLUG
BUT YOU DIDN'T GO ALONE, SO YOU WEREN'T LONELY, RIGHT?
ああ?
HMM?
GRR
I WOULD *RATHER* HAVE BEEN ALONE!
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
DO YOU WANT MY RICE-BALL?
NO, I DON'T!
I MEAN, I MADE THEM SO IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE THEM!

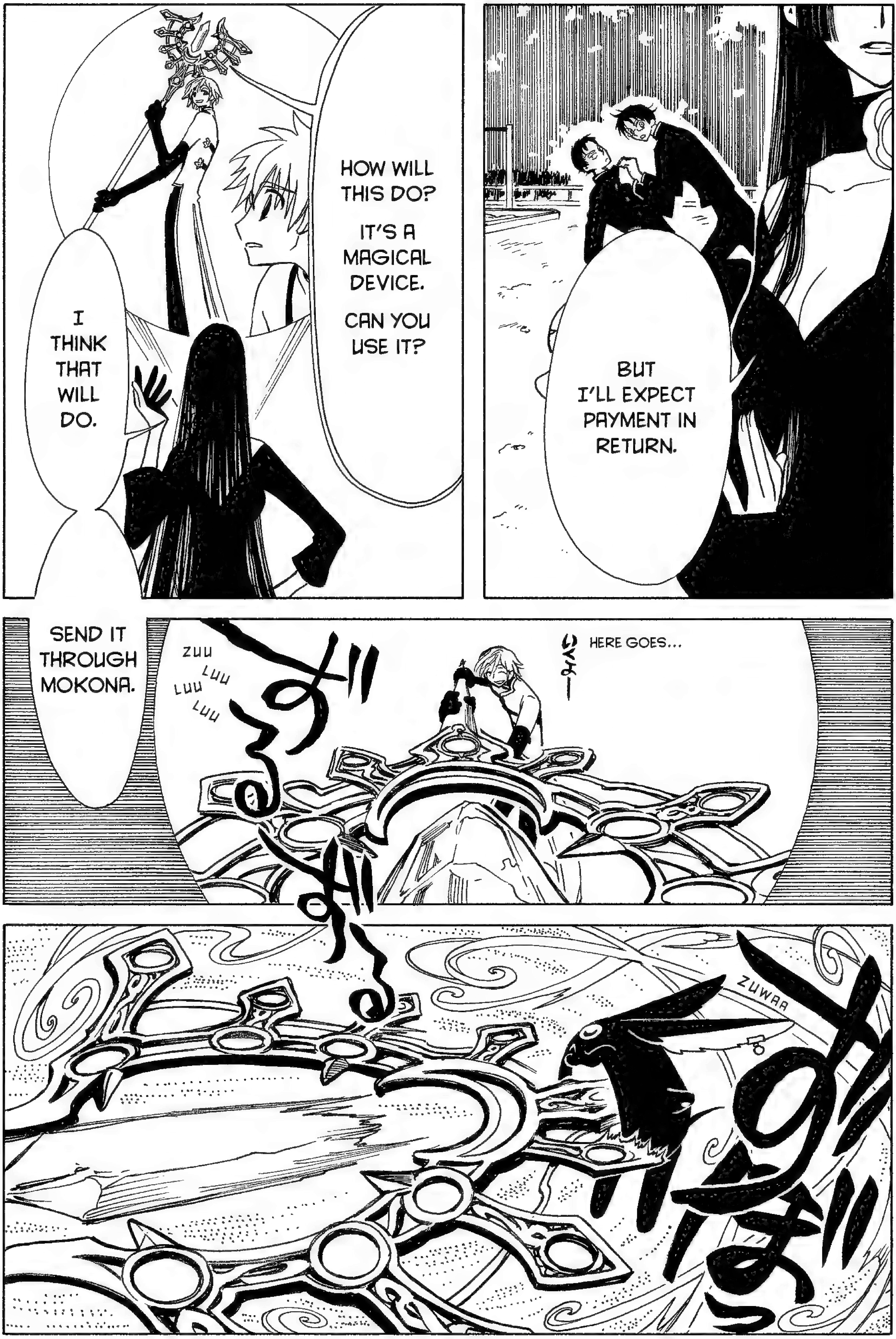

あらあら
NOW, NOW...
YOUR RELATIONSHIP SEEMS AS BAD AS EVER.
LET'S DRINK TOGETHER!
SURE. おう
DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH HOPING IT GETS BETTER!
I *DIDN'T* WANT HIM TO COME TODAY, BUT YOU ORDERED ME TO GO OUT AND INVITE *HIM!!*
ぐいー GULP
ぐい GULP
BUT WHEN DÔMEKI IS AROUND...
...YOU DON'T SEE THE SPRITS, DO YOU?
N-NO I DON'T...
...BUT...
THOSE ARE TOTALLY SEPARATE THINGS!!
DOOOM
HM?
HM?

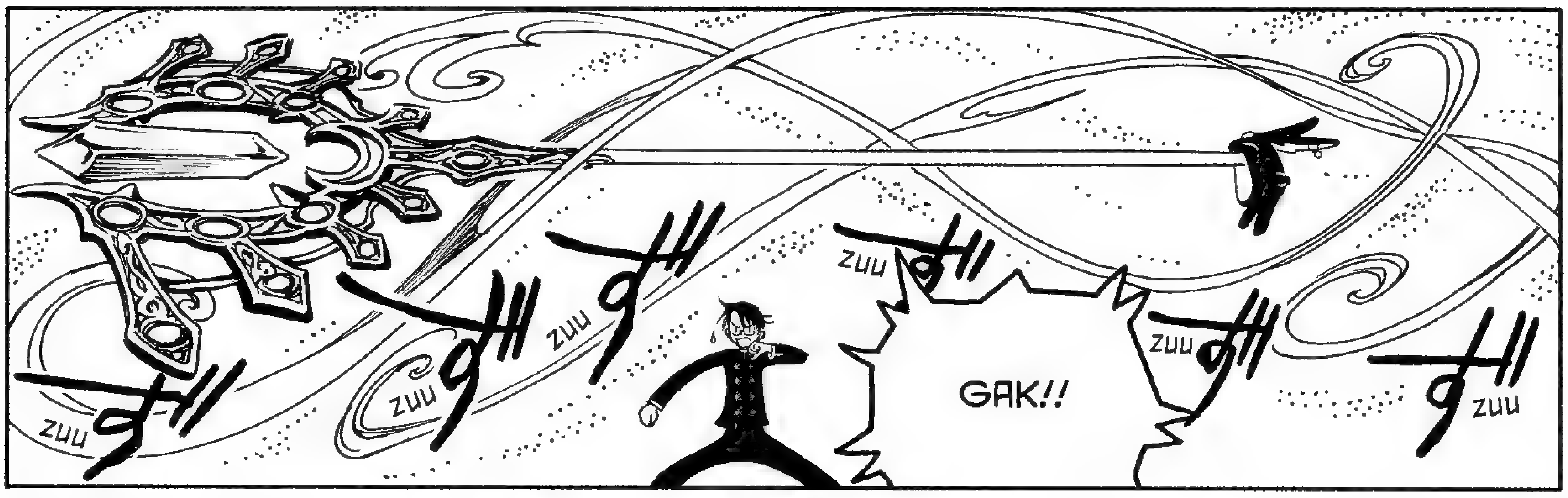

I GUESS YOU'RE NOT AT AN AGE WHERE YOU CAN EASILY ACCEPT THINGS, WATANUKI.
PONK
DON'T GIVE ME YOUR "AH HA HA HA!"
あははは
AH HA HA HA!
FU WHOOM
WHA— WHAT IS THAT?!
BOINK
PAAA
AAAA

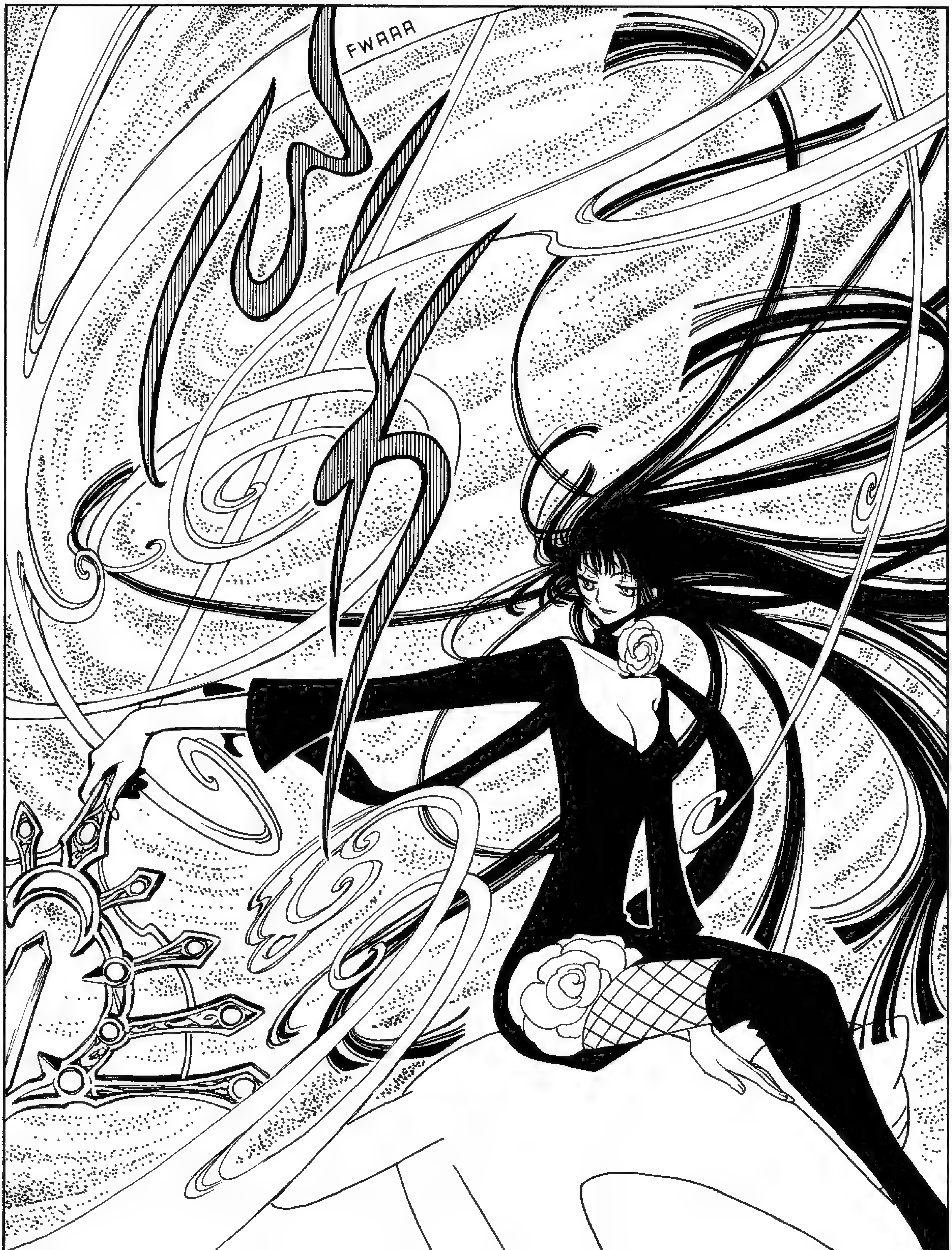

TIME FOR ANOTHER BEER! ♥
ぱぁあああ
PAAAAA
WHAT'S THIS?
SYAORAN-KUN?!
AH? MOKONA, WHAT'S UP?
YAAAAAAH!! IT TALKED!!
MOKONA SURE IS CONVENIENT AT TIMES!
THERE ARE LIMITS TO HOW CONVENIENT THINGS SHOULD BE!!
H— HELLO.
WHAT THE HECK?
THEY'RE YÛKO-SAN'S CUSTOMERS. THEY CAME FROM DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS, AND I THINK THAT THEY'RE TRAVELING BETWEEN DIMENSIONS NOW.

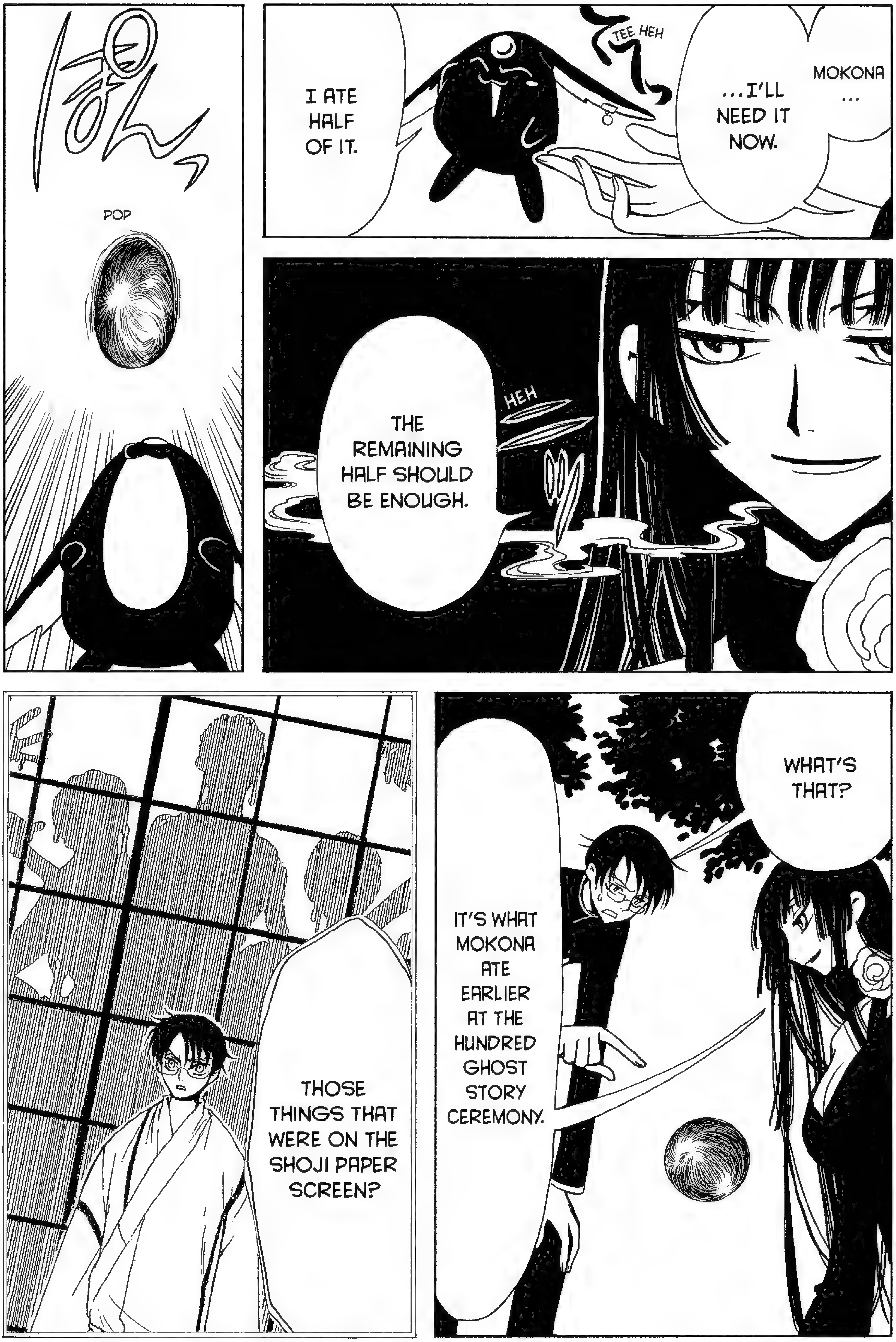

あぁ?
YEAH?
WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?!
WHATEVER! I DON'T CARE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BELIEVE ME IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
I NEVER SAID THAT I DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU.
I HAVE MY DOUBTS THAT EVERYTHING I'VE SEEN UP TO THIS MOMENT IS REAL!

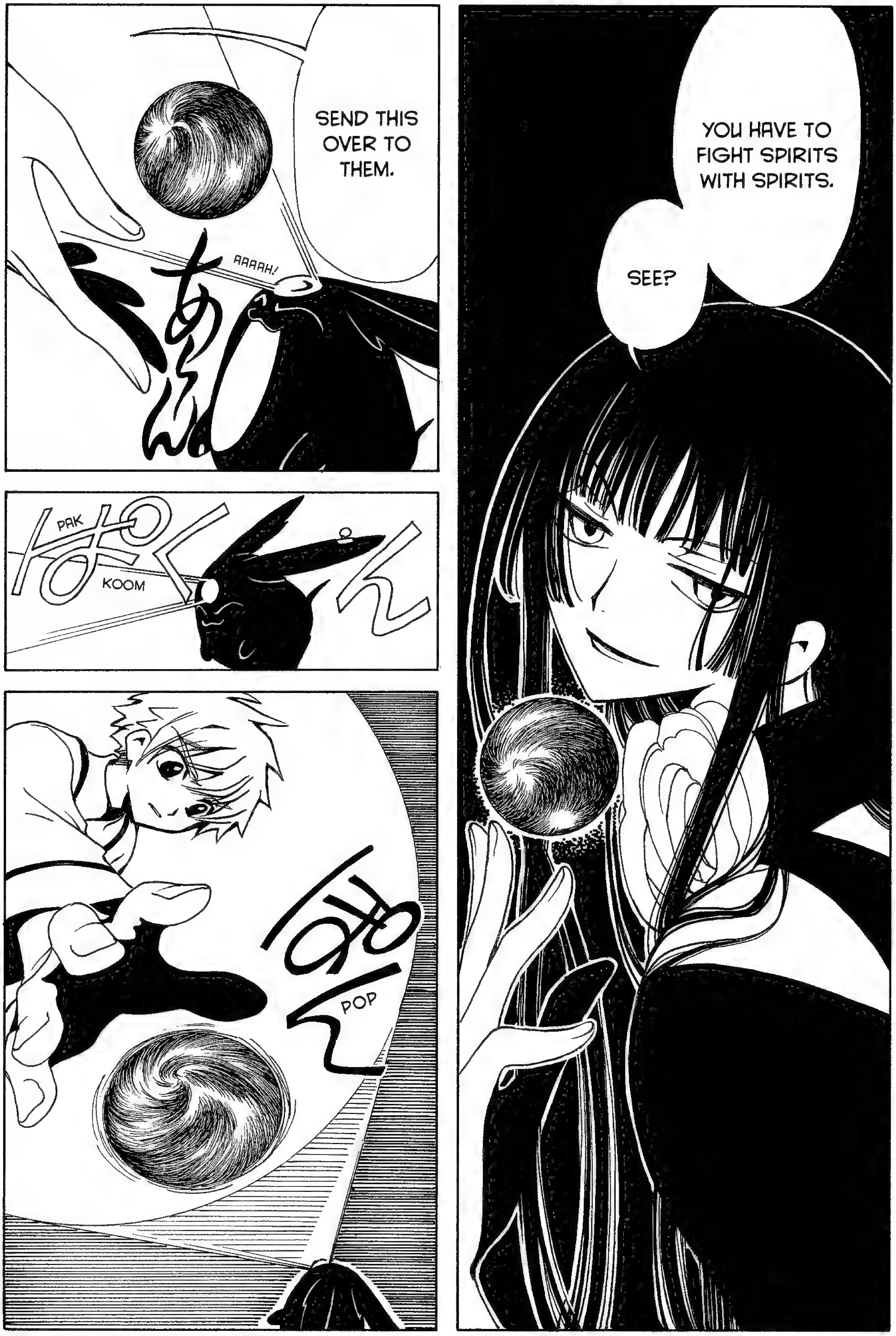
I CAN'T SEE THEM, BUT…
…THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF THESE "SPIRITS" THAT YOU SAY HOVER AROUND YOU.
YOU SAY THEY'RE THERE, SO THEY PROBABLY ARE.
DÔMEKI…
YOUR WHINING ABOUT THEM WHENEVER YOU SEE THEM IS PRETTY PATHETIC, BUT…
WHAT WAS THAT?!
FINE.
I'LL HAND OVER SOMETHING THAT WILL HELP BREAK THE MAGIC ARTS SURROUNDING THE CASTLE.

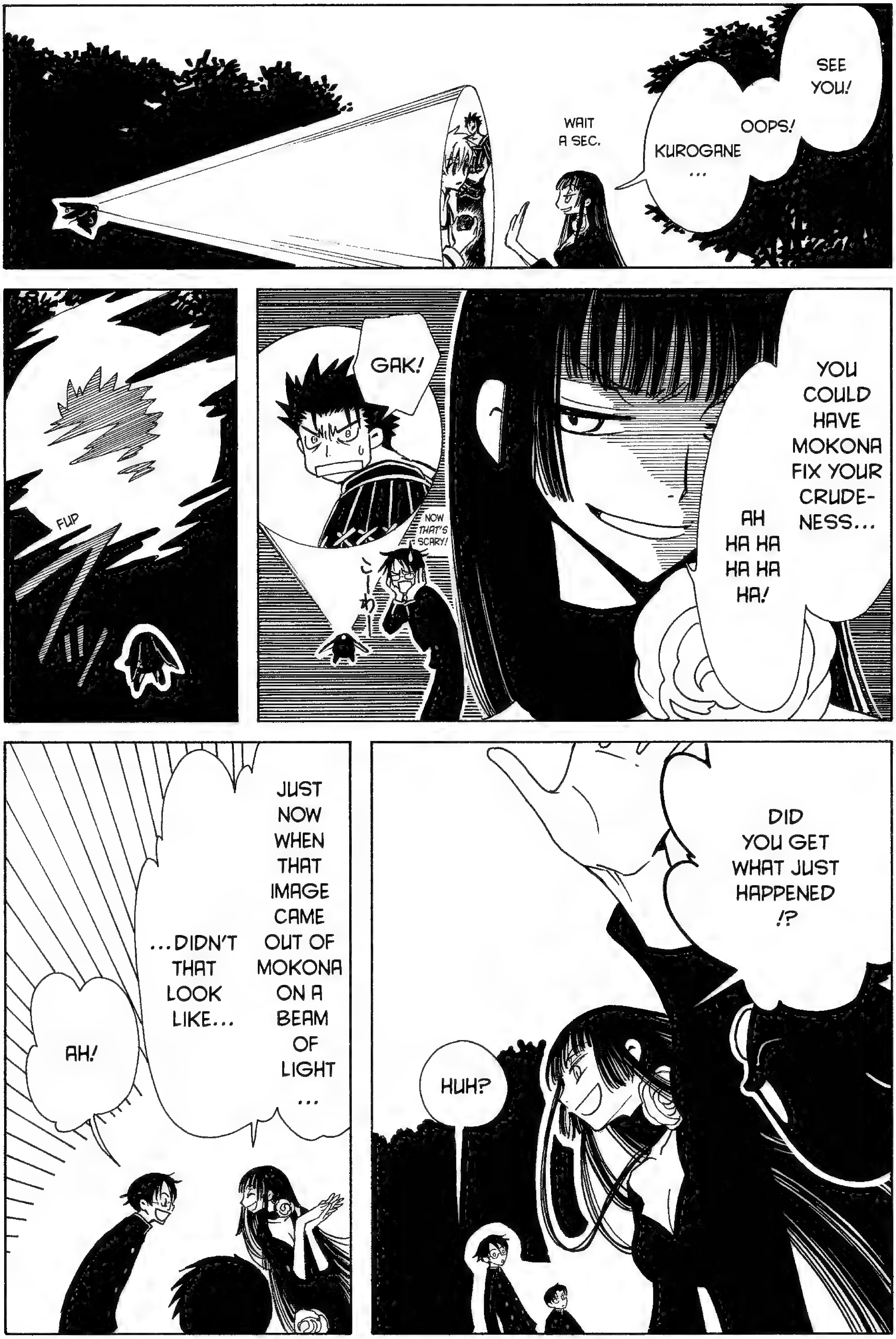

BUT I'LL EXPECT PAYMENT IN RETURN.
HOW WILL THIS DO?
IT'S A MAGICAL DEVICE.
CAN YOU USE IT?
I THINK THAT WILL DO.
いくよー
HERE GOES...
SEND IT THROUGH MOKONA.
ZUU LUU LUU LUU
ずるるる
ZUWAA
ずわっ

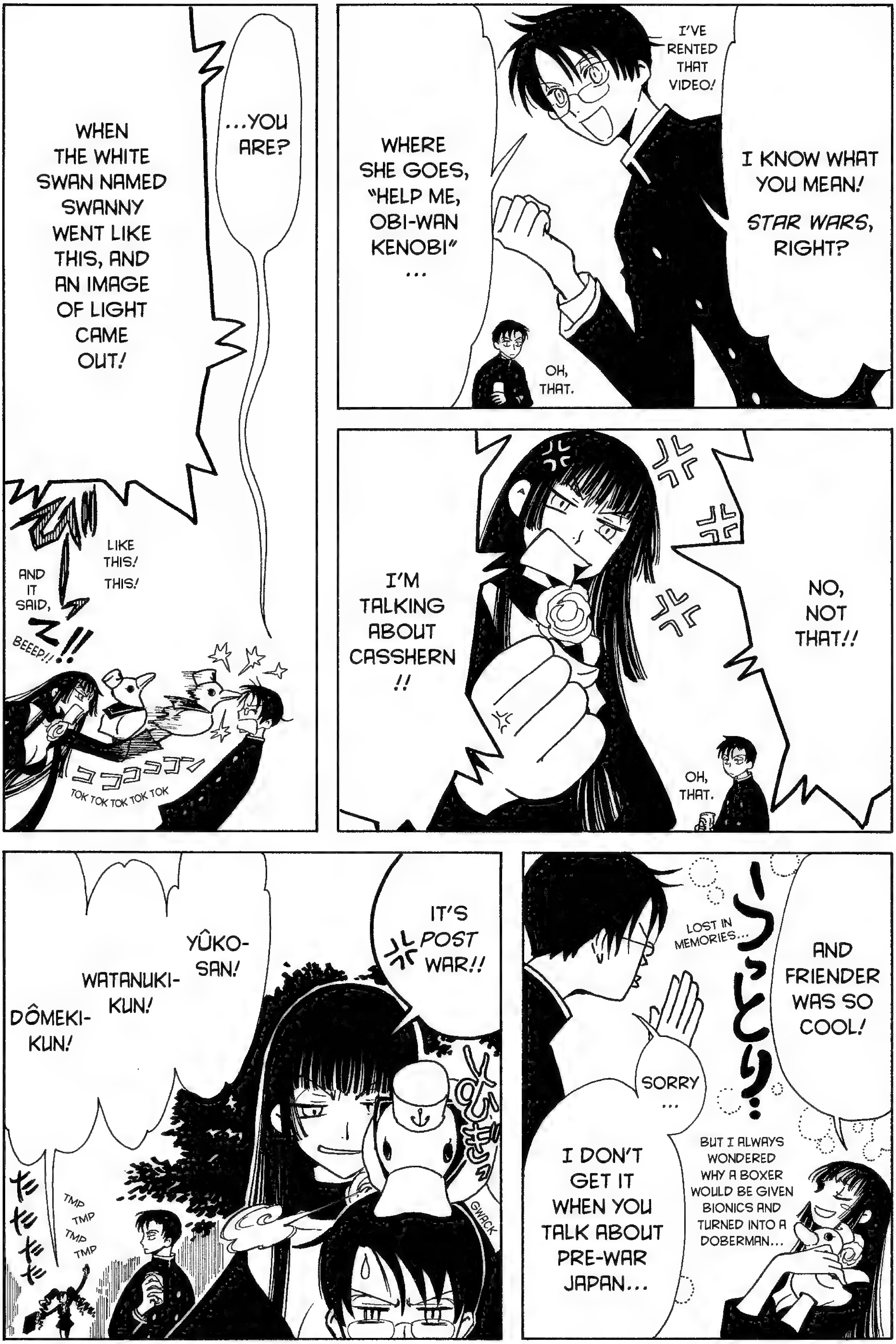

zuu
zuu
zuu
zuu
zuu
zuu
GAK!!

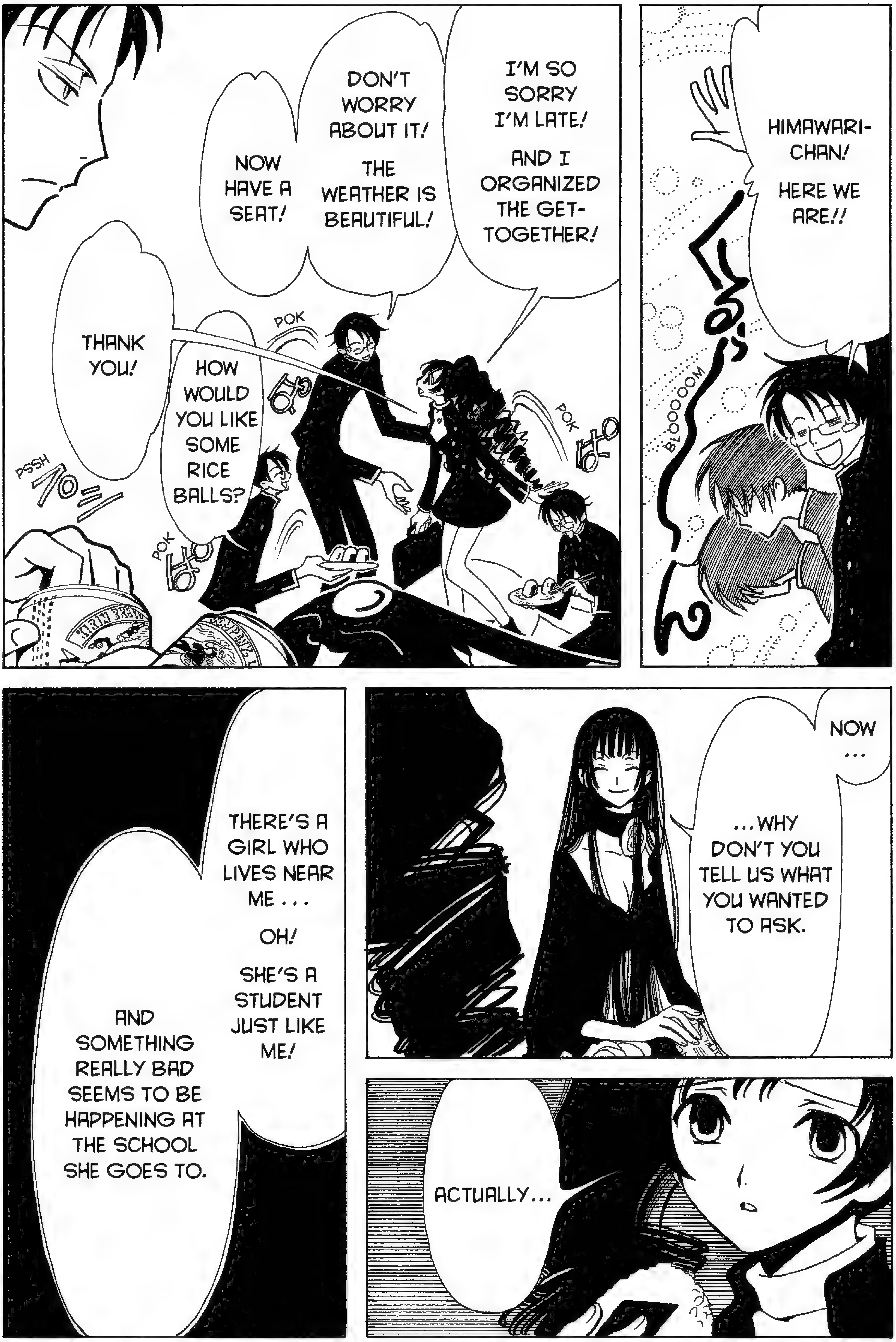

FWAAA

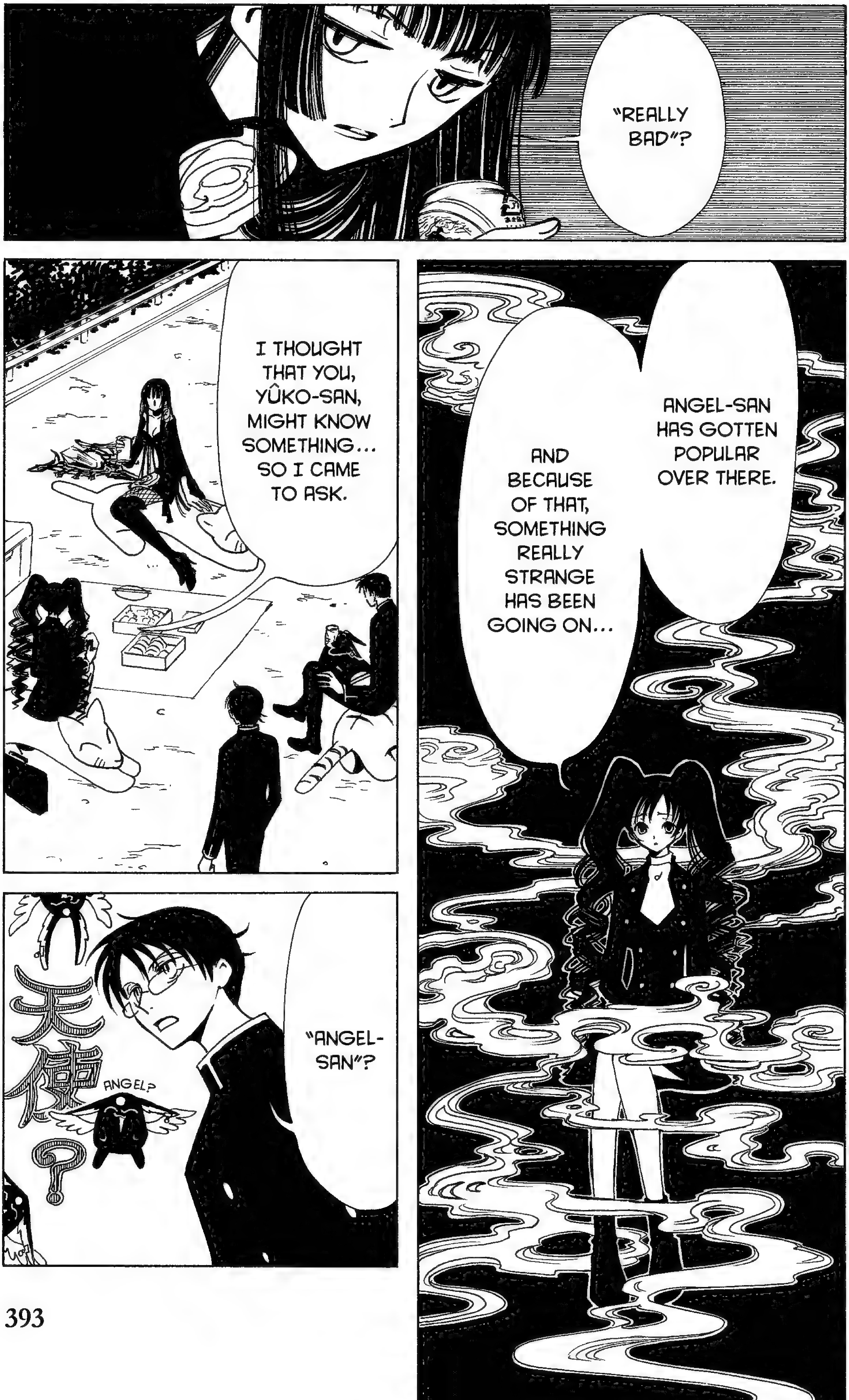

MOKONA ...
...I'LL NEED IT NOW.
TEE HEH
I ATE HALF OF IT.
ぽん
POP
THE REMAINING HALF SHOULD BE ENOUGH.
HEH
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S WHAT MOKONA ATE EARLIER AT THE HUNDRED GHOST STORY CEREMONY.
THOSE THINGS THAT WERE ON THE SHOJI PAPER SCREEN?

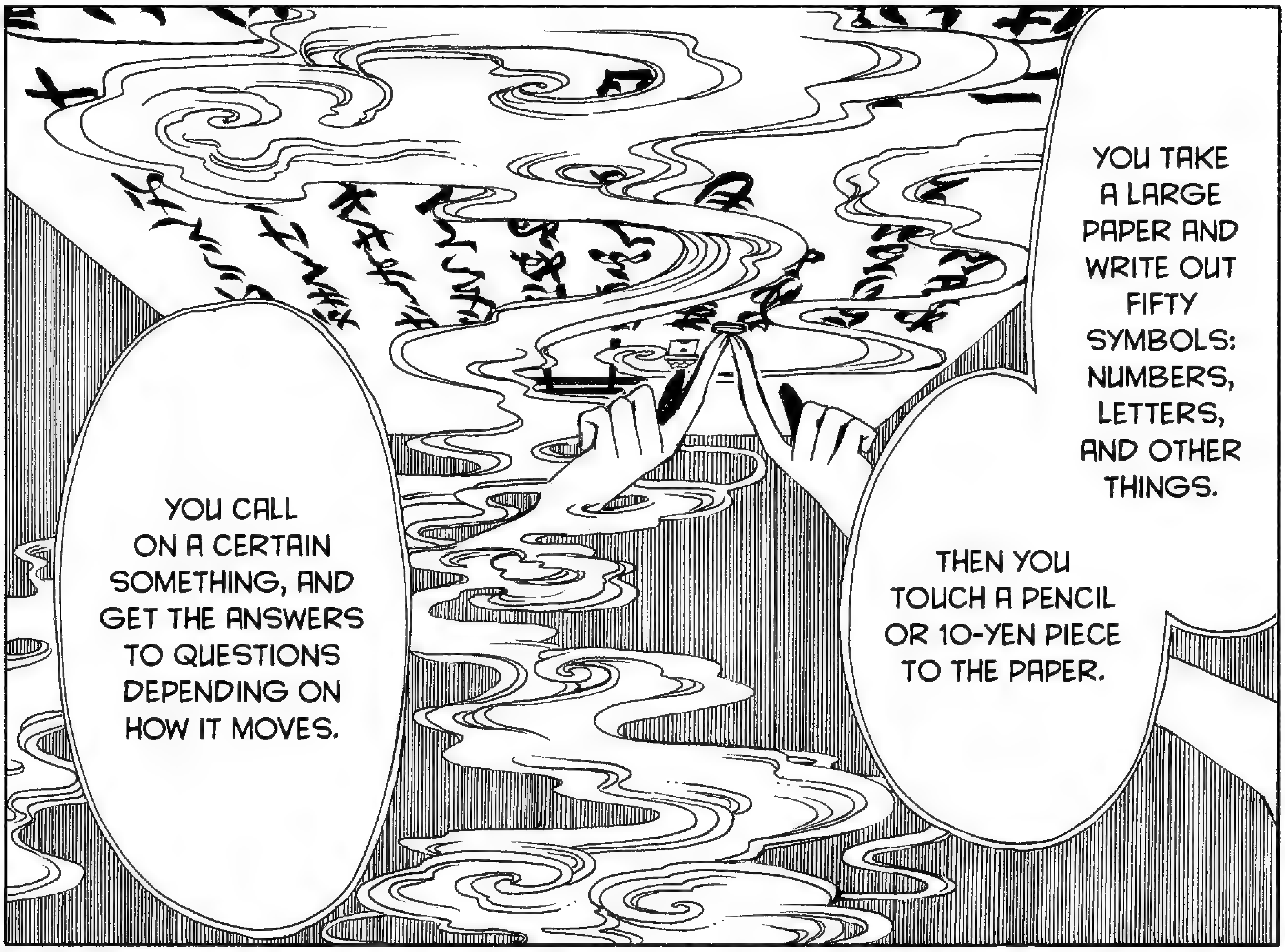

YOU HAVE TO FIGHT SPIRITS WITH SPIRITS.
SEE?
SEND THIS OVER TO THEM.
あ〜ん
AAAAH!
ぱくん
PAK
KOOM
ぽん
POP

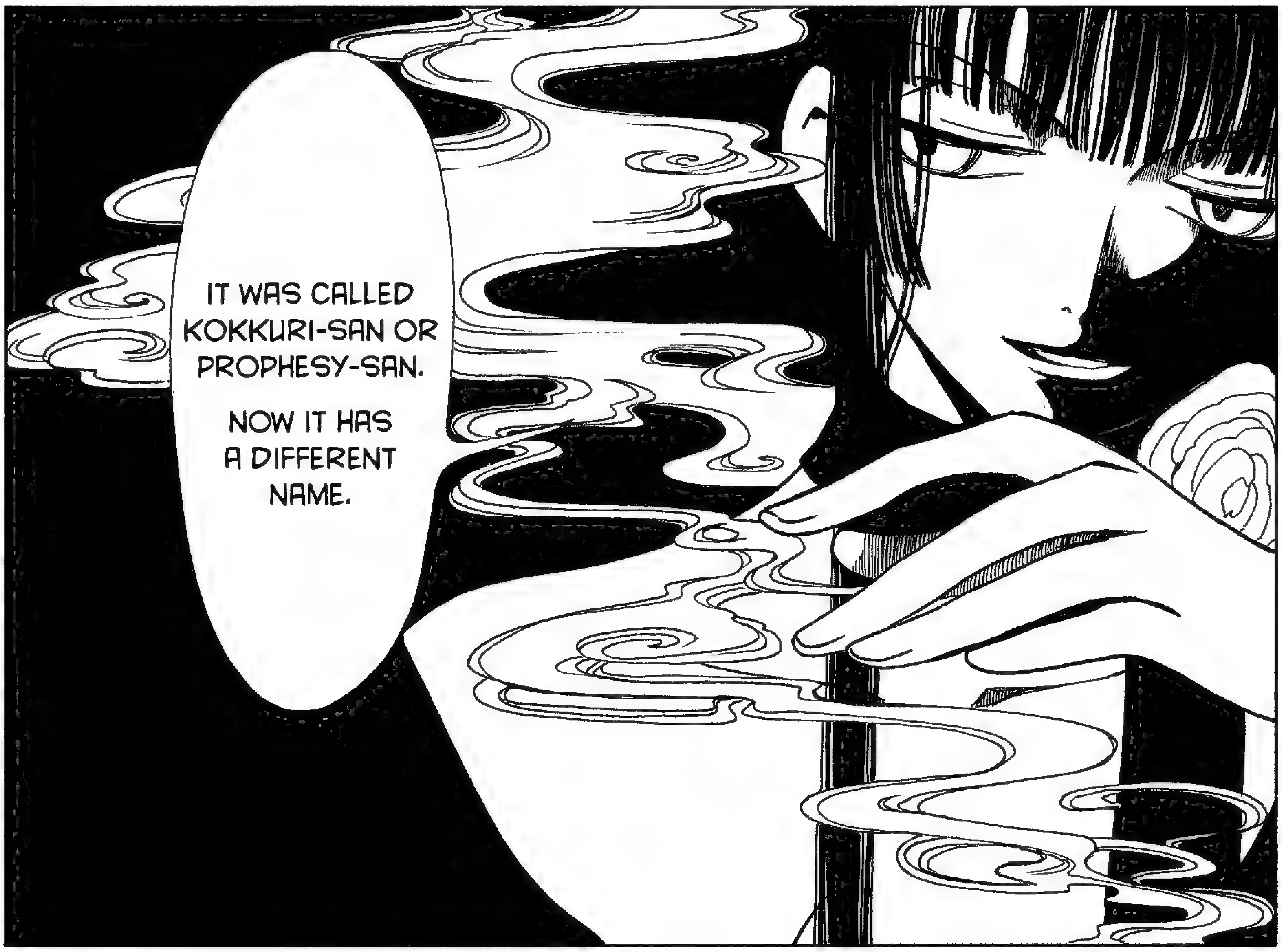

SEE YOU!
OOPS!
KUROGANE...
WAIT A SEC.
YOU COULD HAVE MOKONA FIX YOUR CRUDENESS...
AH HA HA HA HA HA!
GAK!
NOW THAT'S SCARY!
FUP
DID YOU GET WHAT JUST HAPPENED!?
HUH?
JUST NOW WHEN THAT IMAGE CAME OUT OF MOKONA ON A BEAM OF LIGHT...
...DIDN'T THAT LOOK LIKE...
AH!

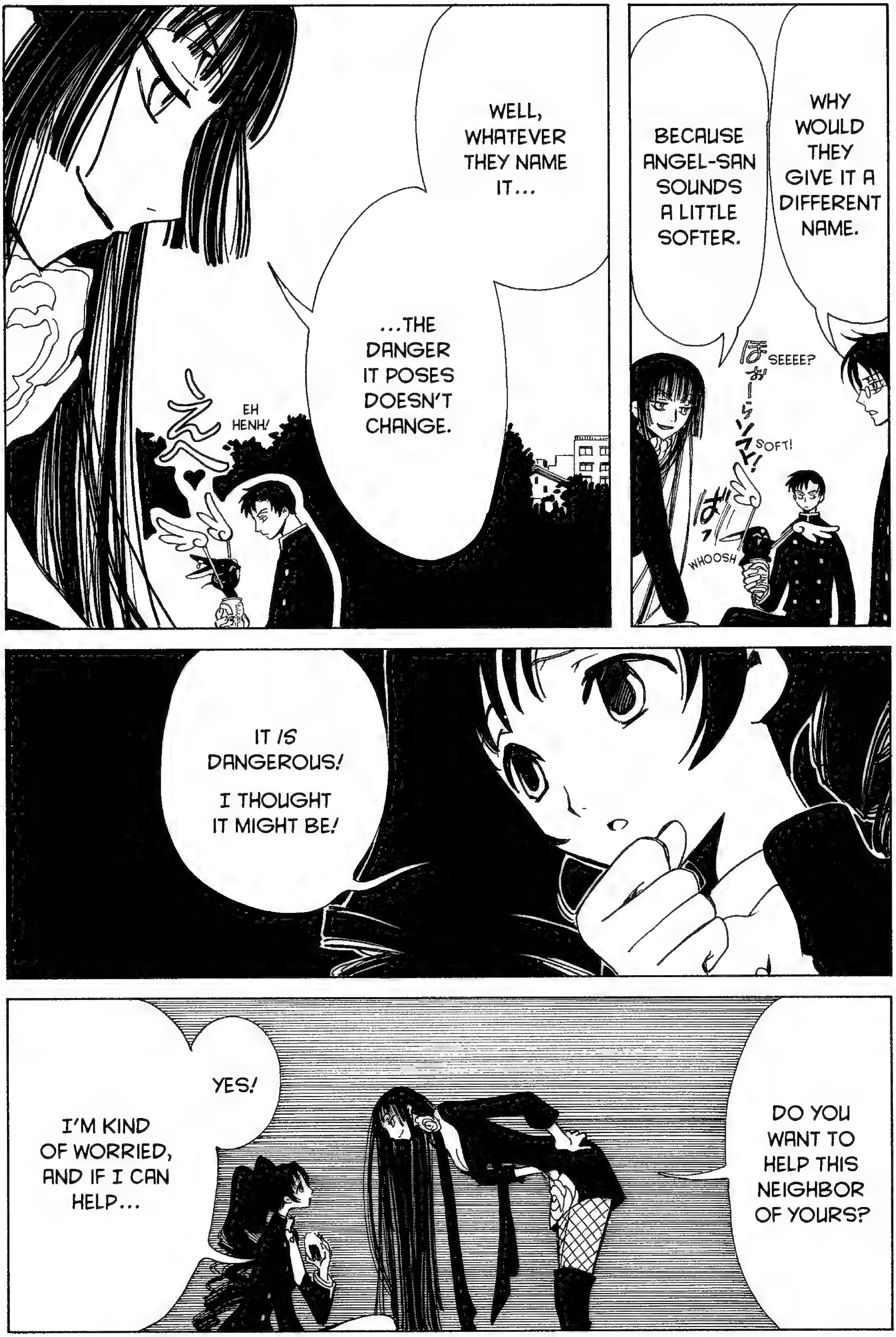

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! STAR WARS, RIGHT?
I'VE RENTED THAT VIDEO!
WHERE SHE GOES, "HELP ME, OBI-WAN KENOBI"...
OH, THAT.
NO, NOT THAT!!
I'M TALKING ABOUT CASSHERN!!
OH, THAT.
...YOU ARE?
WHEN THE WHITE SWAN NAMED SWANNY WENT LIKE THIS, AND AN IMAGE OF LIGHT CAME OUT!
LIKE THIS! THIS!
AND IT SAID,
BEEEP!!
TOK TOK TOK TOK TOK
AND FRIENDER WAS SO COOL!
うっとり
LOST IN MEMORIES...
BUT I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY A BOXER WOULD BE GIVEN BIONICS AND TURNED INTO A DOBERMAN...
SORRY...
I DON'T GET IT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT PRE-WAR JAPAN...
IT'S POST WAR!!
GWACK
YÛKO-SAN!
WATANUKI-KUN!
DÔMEKI-KUN!
TMP TMP TMP TMP

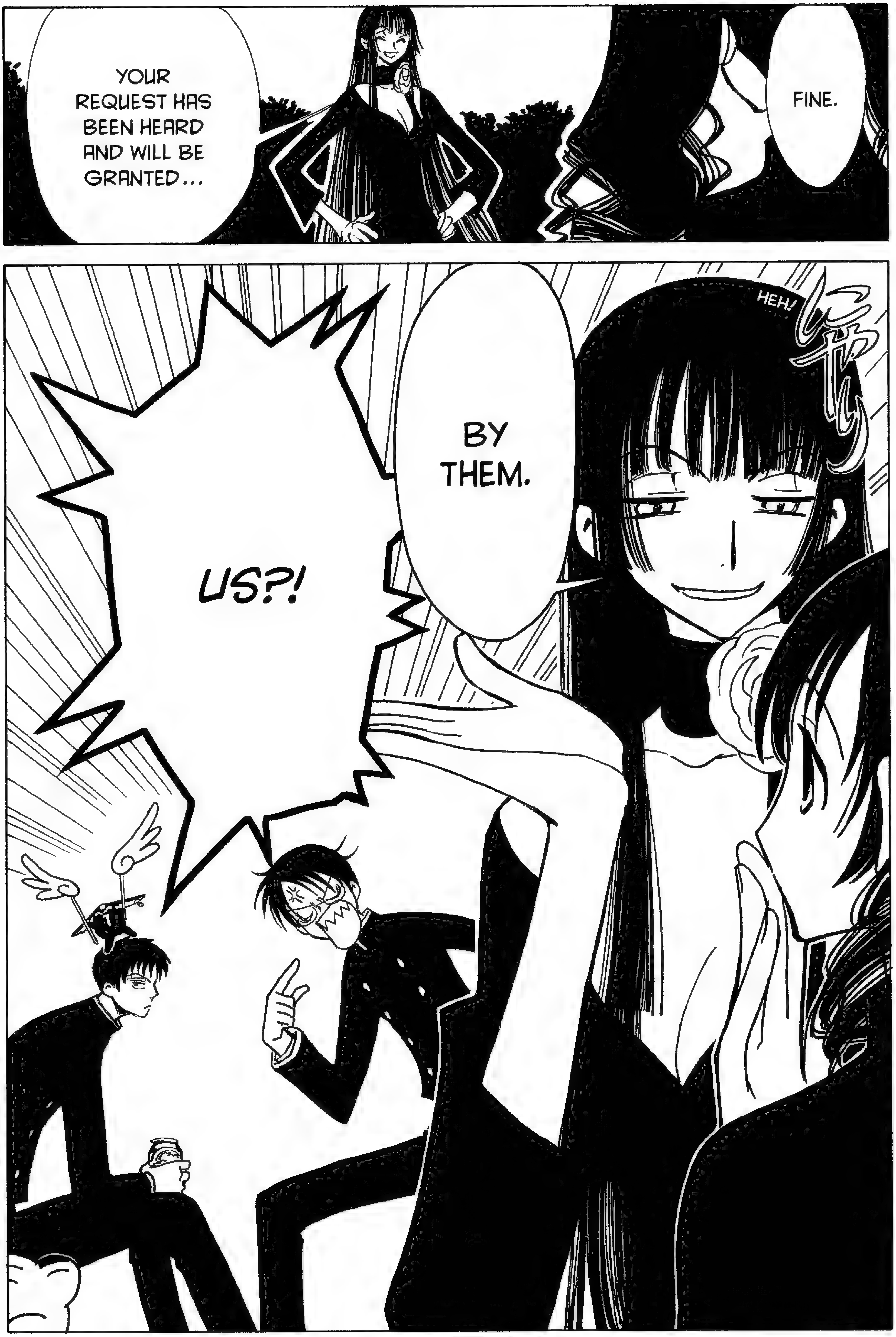

HIMAWARI-CHAN! HERE WE ARE!!
BLOOOOOM
I'M SO SORRY I'M LATE! AND I ORGANIZED THE GET-TOGETHER!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! THE WEATHER IS BEAUTIFUL!
NOW HAVE A SEAT!
POK
POK
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE SOME RICE BALLS?
POK
THANK YOU!
PSSH
NOW ...
...WHY DON'T YOU TELL US WHAT YOU WANTED TO ASK.
ACTUALLY...
THERE'S A GIRL WHO LIVES NEAR ME . . . OH! SHE'S A STUDENT JUST LIKE ME!
AND SOMETHING REALLY BAD SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING AT THE SCHOOL SHE GOES TO.


"REALLY BAD"?
ANGEL-SAN HAS GOTTEN POPULAR OVER THERE.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, SOMETHING REALLY STRANGE HAS BEEN GOING ON…
I THOUGHT THAT YOU, YÛKO-SAN, MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING… SO I CAME TO ASK.
"ANGEL-SAN"?
天使？
ANGEL?

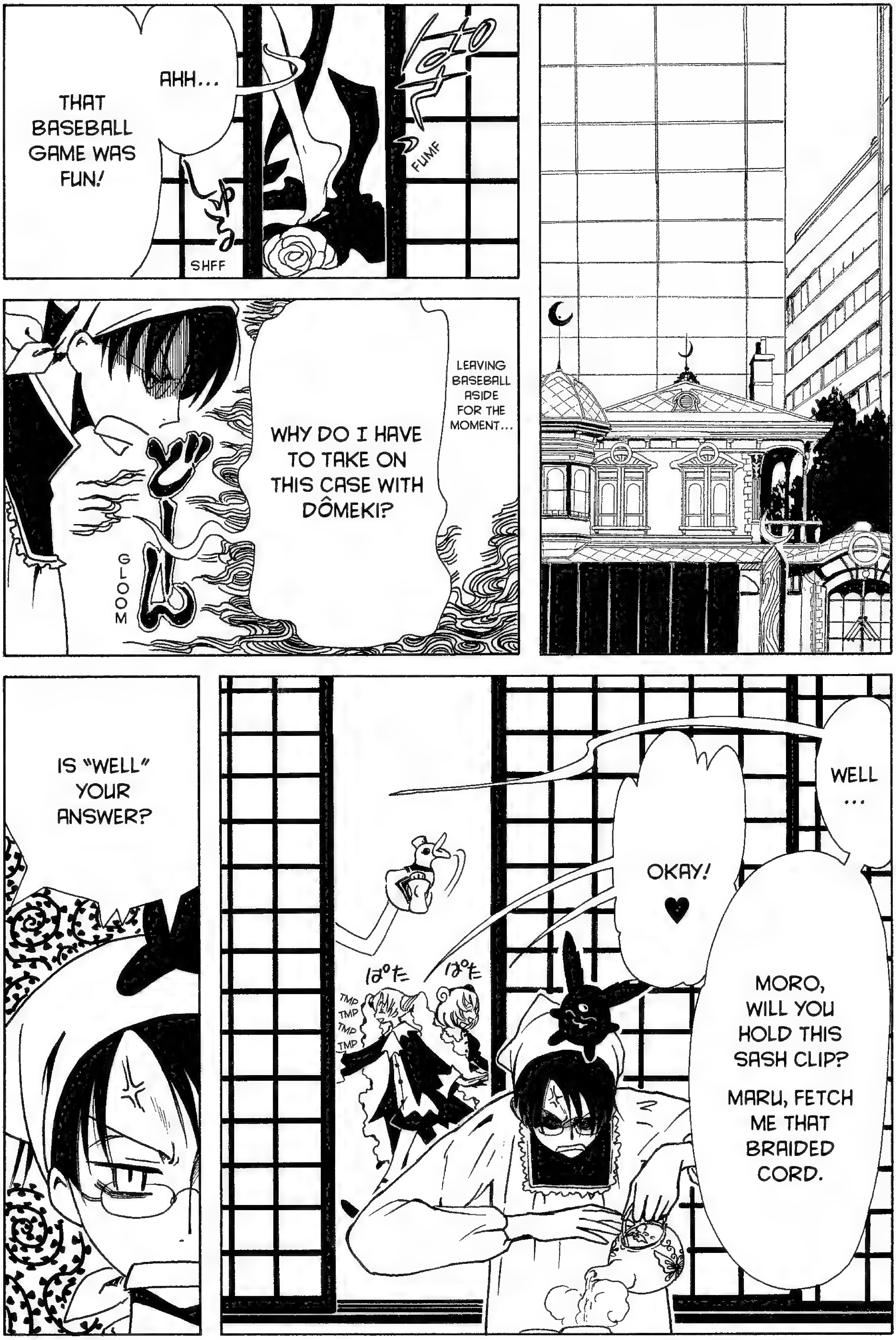

YOU TAKE A LARGE PAPER AND WRITE OUT FIFTY SYMBOLS: NUMBERS, LETTERS, AND OTHER THINGS.
THEN YOU TOUCH A PENCIL OR 10-YEN PIECE TO THE PAPER.
YOU CALL ON A CERTAIN SOMETHING, AND GET THE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS DEPENDING ON HOW IT MOVES.

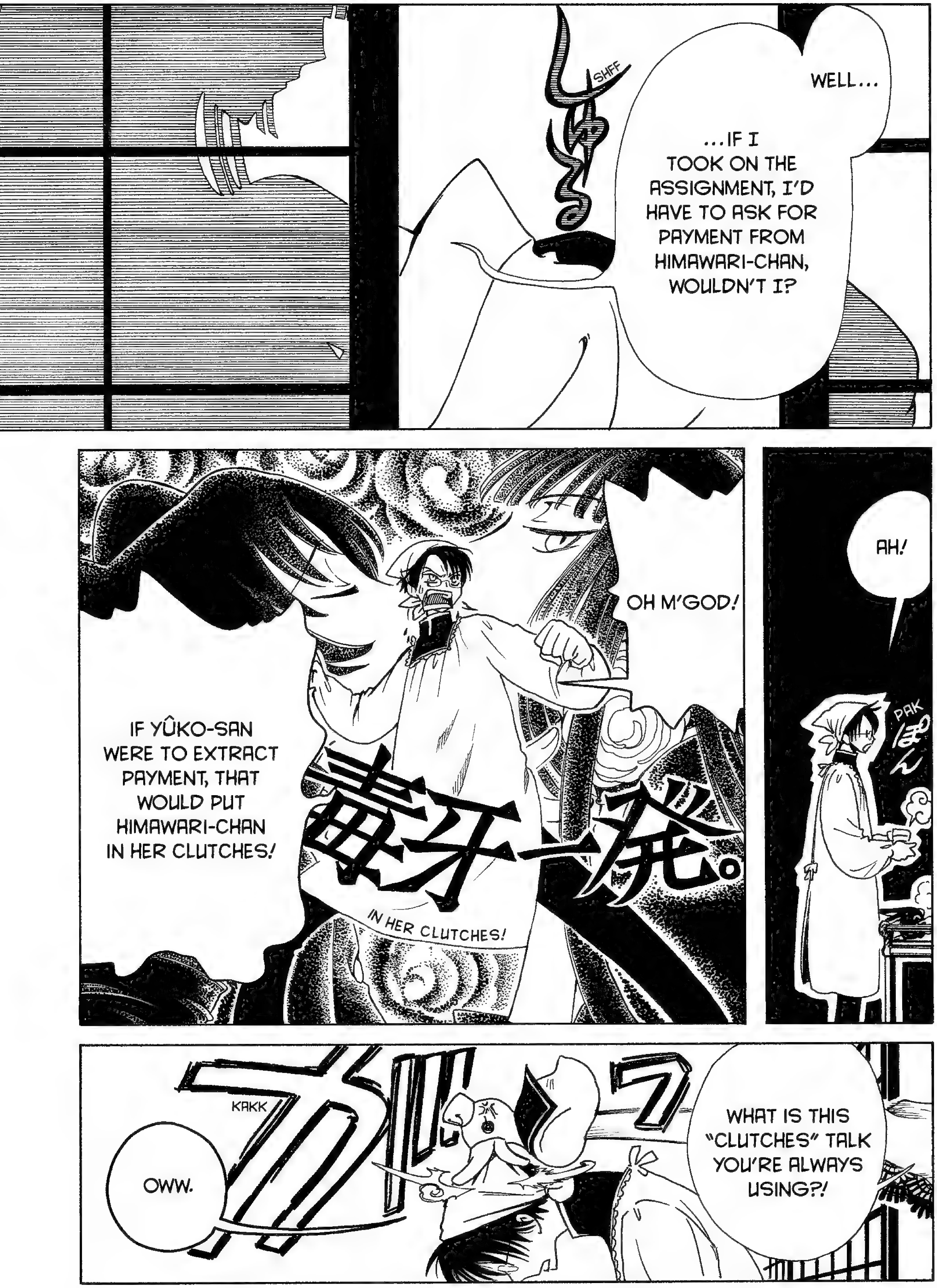

IT WAS CALLED KOKKURI-SAN OR PROPHESY-SAN.
NOW IT HAS A DIFFERENT NAME.


WHY WOULD THEY GIVE IT A DIFFERENT NAME.
BECAUSE ANGEL-SAN SOUNDS A LITTLE SOFTER.
ほぉ～ら
SEEEE?
ソフト!
SOFT!
ばっ
WHOOSH
WELL, WHATEVER THEY NAME IT...
...THE DANGER IT POSES DOESN'T CHANGE.
え～
EH HENH!
IT *IS* DANGEROUS!
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE!
DO YOU WANT TO HELP THIS NEIGHBOR OF YOURS?
YES!
I'M KIND OF WORRIED, AND IF I CAN HELP...

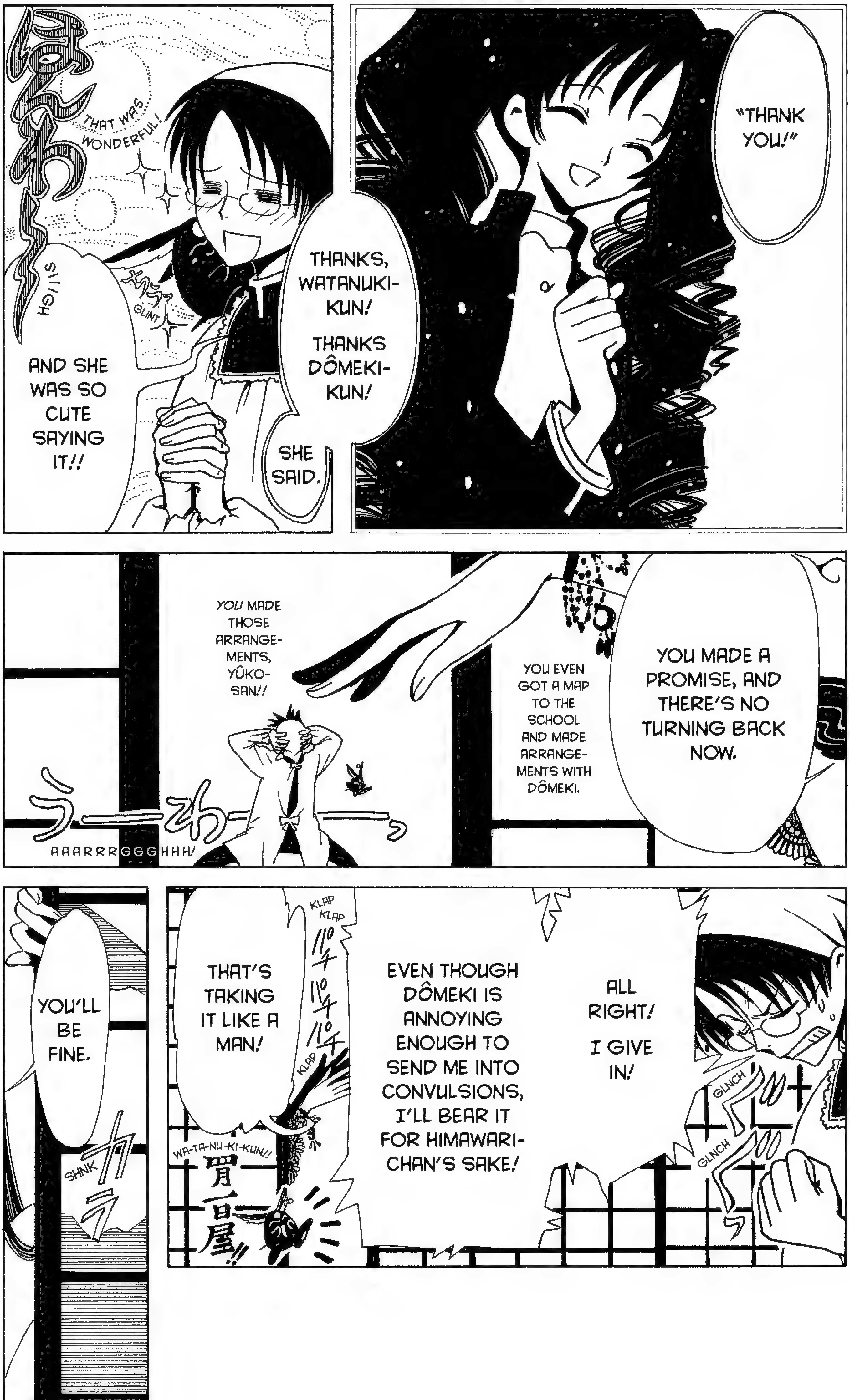

FINE.
YOUR REQUEST HAS BEEN HEARD AND WILL BE GRANTED...
HEH!
BY THEM.
US?!

xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

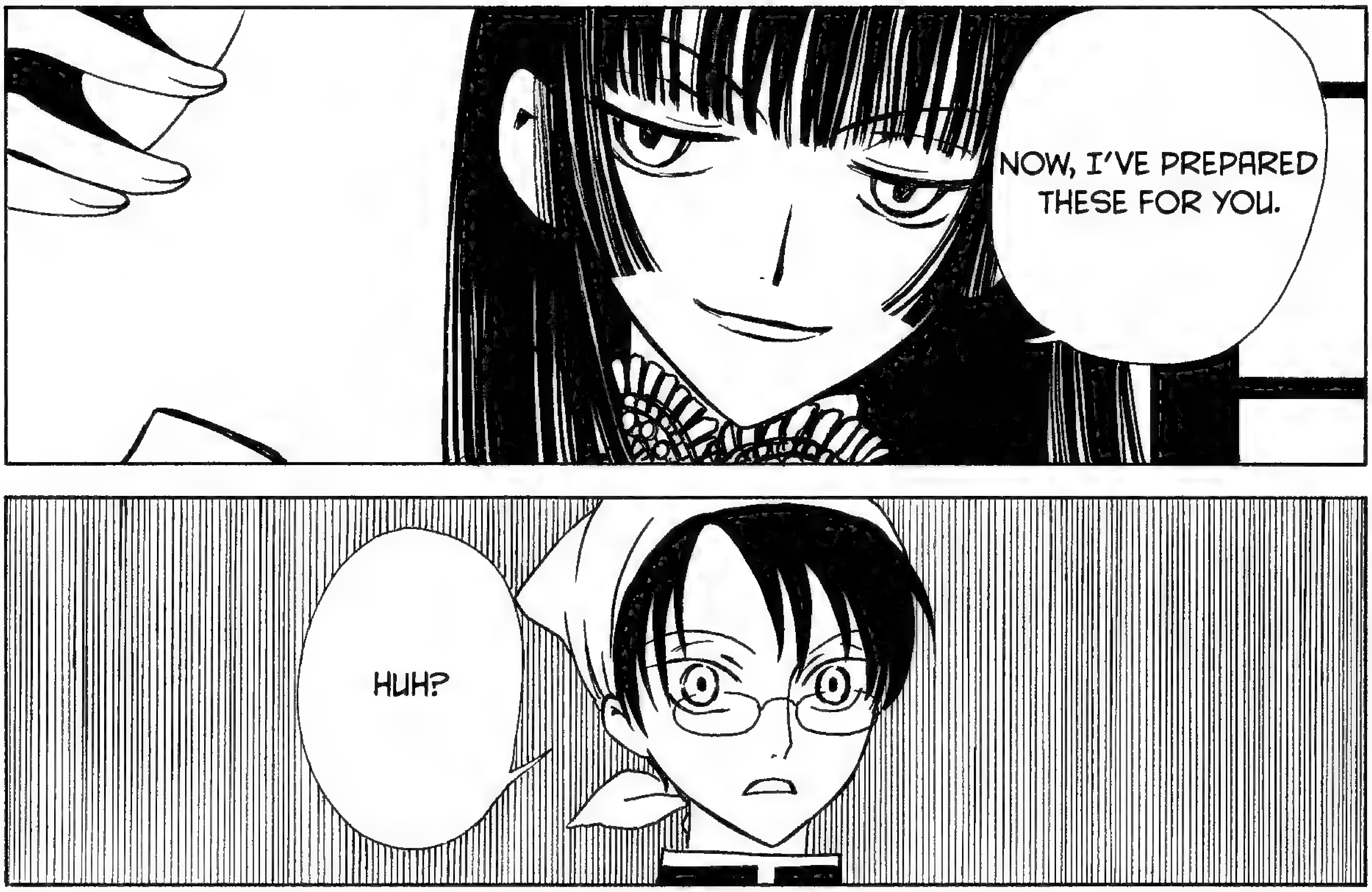

AHH...
THAT BASEBALL GAME WAS FUN!
FUMF
SHFF
LEAVING BASEBALL ASIDE FOR THE MOMENT...
WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE ON THIS CASE WITH DÔMEKI?
GLOOM
WELL...
OKAY! ♥
MORO, WILL YOU HOLD THIS SASH CLIP?
MARU, FETCH ME THAT BRAIDED CORD.
TMP TMP TMP TMP
IS "WELL" YOUR ANSWER?

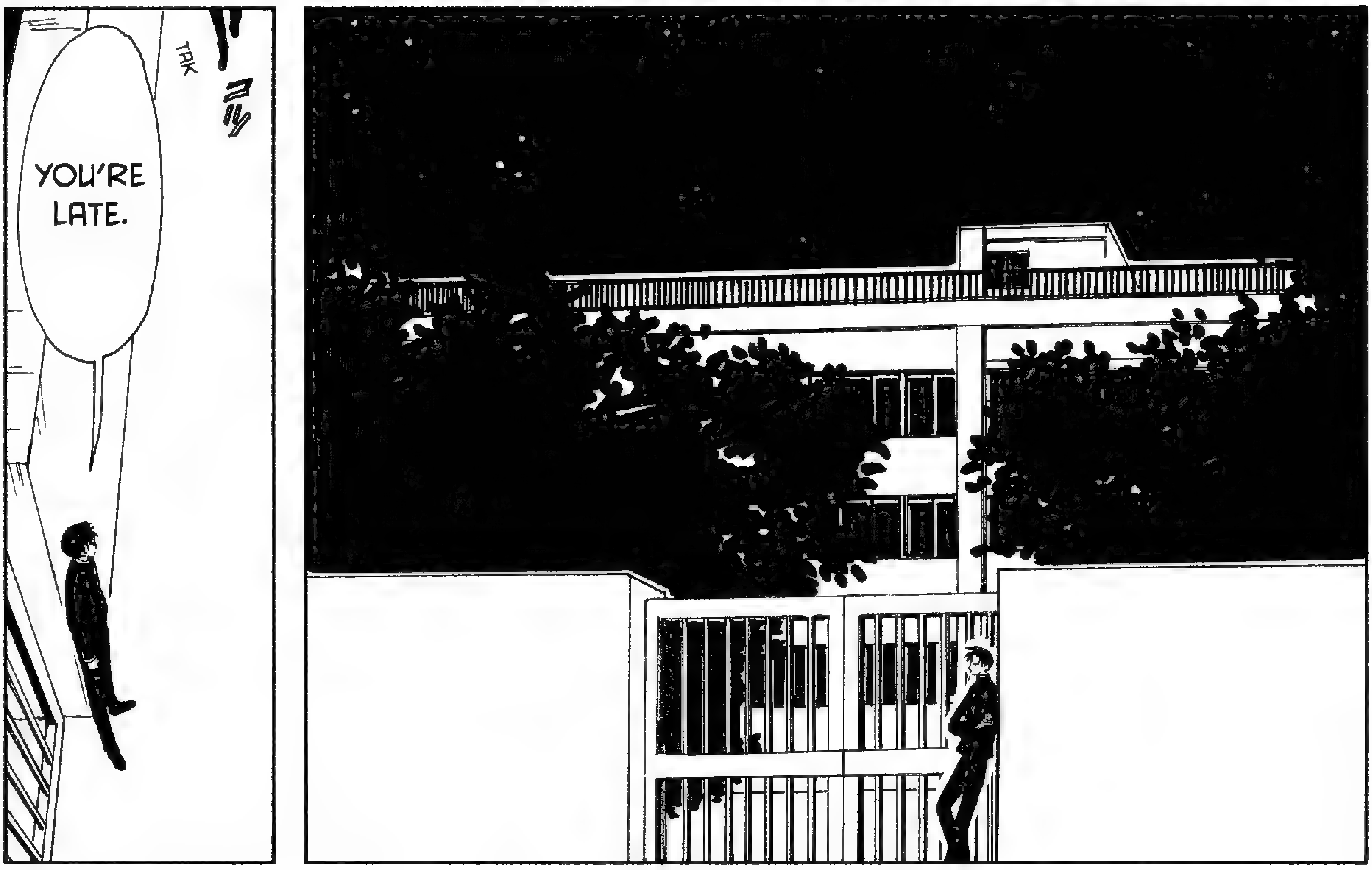

SHFF
WELL...
...IF I TOOK ON THE ASSIGNMENT, I'D HAVE TO ASK FOR PAYMENT FROM HIMAWARI-CHAN, WOULDN'T I?
AH!
PAK
ぽん
OH M'GOD!
IF YÛKO-SAN WERE TO EXTRACT PAYMENT, THAT WOULD PUT HIMAWARI-CHAN IN HER CLUTCHES!
毒牙一発。
IN HER CLUTCHES!
WHAT IS THIS "CLUTCHES" TALK YOU'RE ALWAYS USING?!
KAKK
OWW.

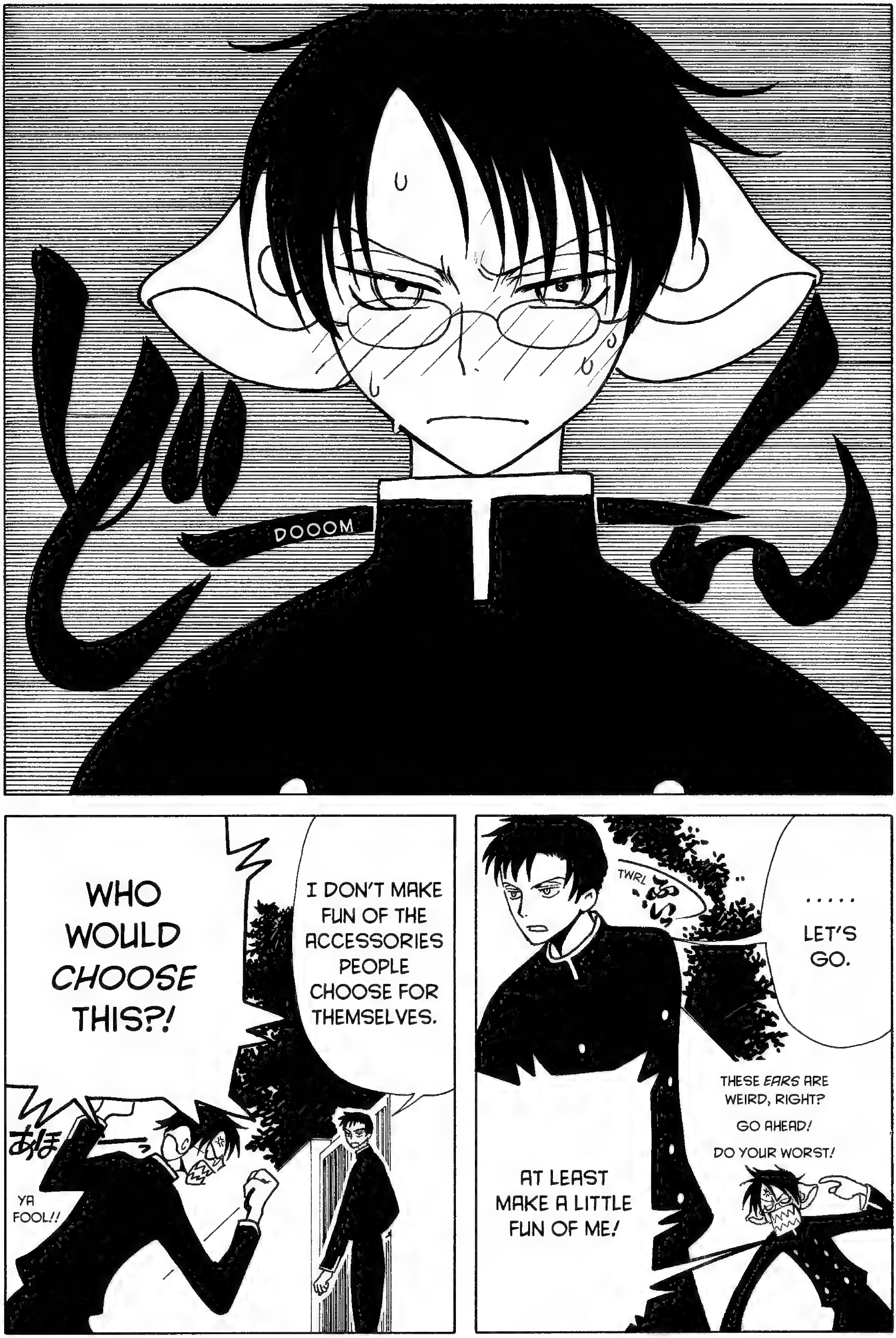
BUT I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO HELP.
EVEN IF SOMETHING AWFUL IS THERE, I CAN ONLY SEE IT.
I CAN'T STOP IT.
SHAKE SHAKE
しゃかしゃか
ひら
FIP
ひら
FIP
AND THAT'S WHY DÔMEKI IS GOING, RIGHT?
THAT'S THE WORST PART OF THE WHOLE DEAL!
AAAAA! WHY IS DÔMEKI ALWAYS HANGING AROUND ME THESE DAYS?!
I HATE IT!!
いやーっ
BLOOP
ころん
DUCK-SAN IS IN DANGER!!
WHOOSH
BUT HIMAWARI-CHAN THANKED YOU FOR HELPING.
BOINK
SAVED!

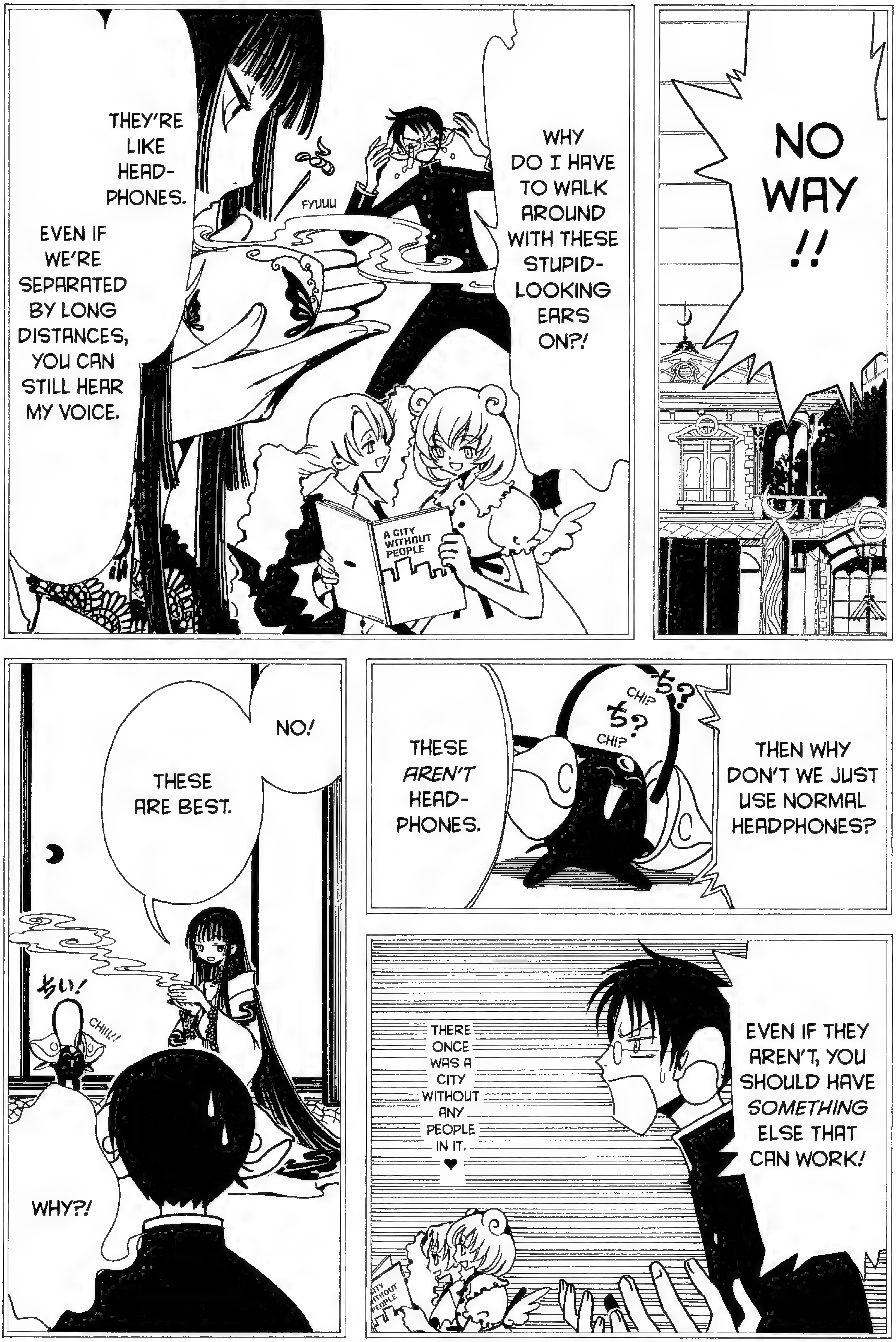

"THANK YOU!"
THANKS, WATANUKI-KUN! THANKS DÔMEKI-KUN!
SHE SAID.
THAT WAS WONDERFUL!
SIGH
GLINT
AND SHE WAS SO CUTE SAYING IT!!
YOU MADE A PROMISE, AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK NOW.
YOU EVEN GOT A MAP TO THE SCHOOL AND MADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH DÔMEKI.
YOU MADE THOSE ARRANGEMENTS, YÛKO-SAN!!
AAARRRGGGHHH!
ALL RIGHT! I GIVE IN!
GLNCH
GLNCH
EVEN THOUGH DÔMEKI IS ANNOYING ENOUGH TO SEND ME INTO CONVULSIONS, I'LL BEAR IT FOR HIMAWARI-CHAN'S SAKE!
KLAP KLAP
パチパチパチ
KLAP
THAT'S TAKING IT LIKE A MAN!
WA-TA-NU-KI-KUN!!
YOU'LL BE FINE.
SHNK
カラ

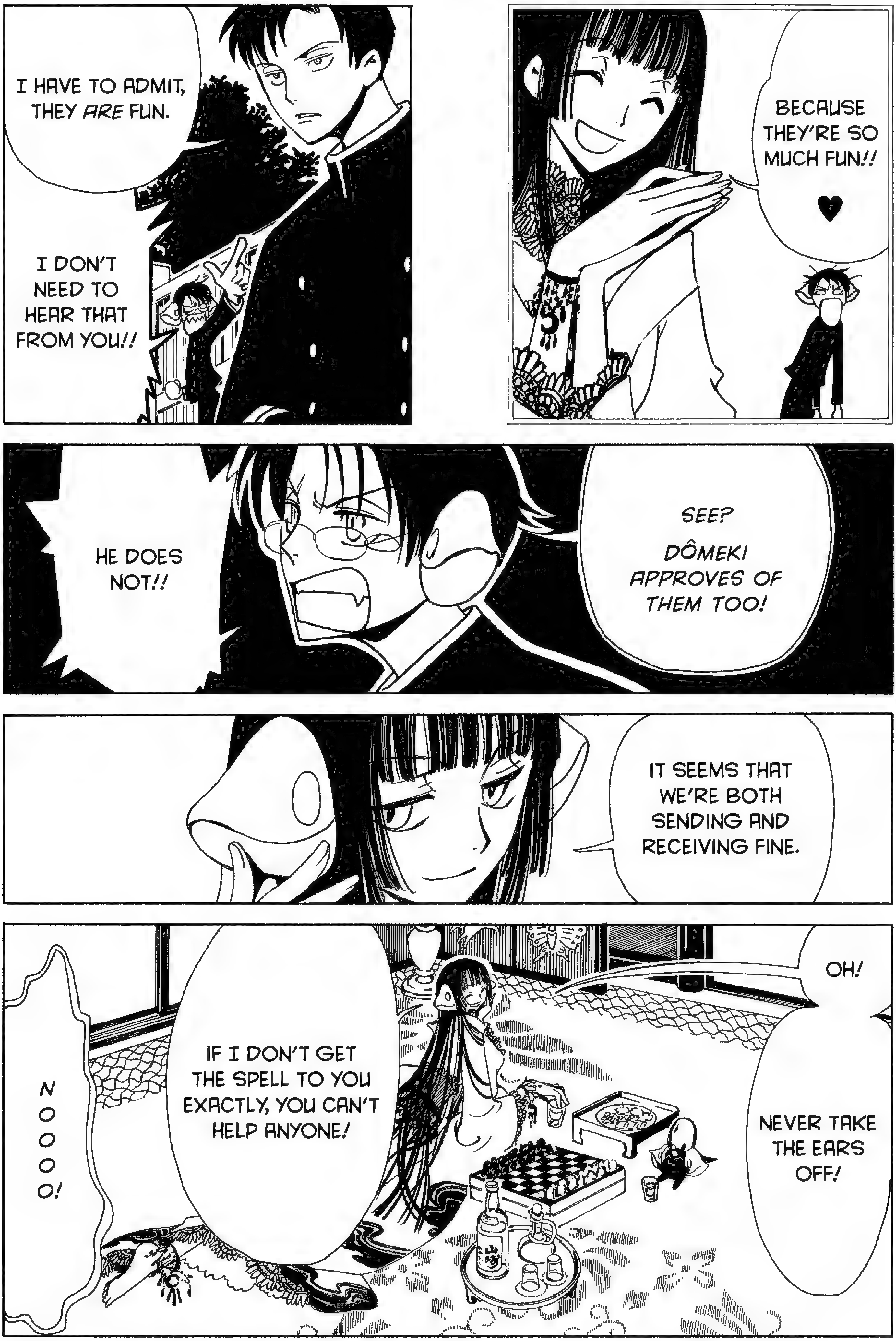
I WON'T BE GOING WITH YOU…
…BUT I CAN GIVE YOU ADVICE.
OH, YÛKO-SAN!!
OF COURSE THERE'S A PRICE FOR THAT.
BUT WE'LL JUST DEDUCT THAT FROM YOUR PAYCHECK.
I KNEW IT!
WE WOULDN'T WANT YÛKO-SAN TO BREAK CHARACTER, WOULD WE?

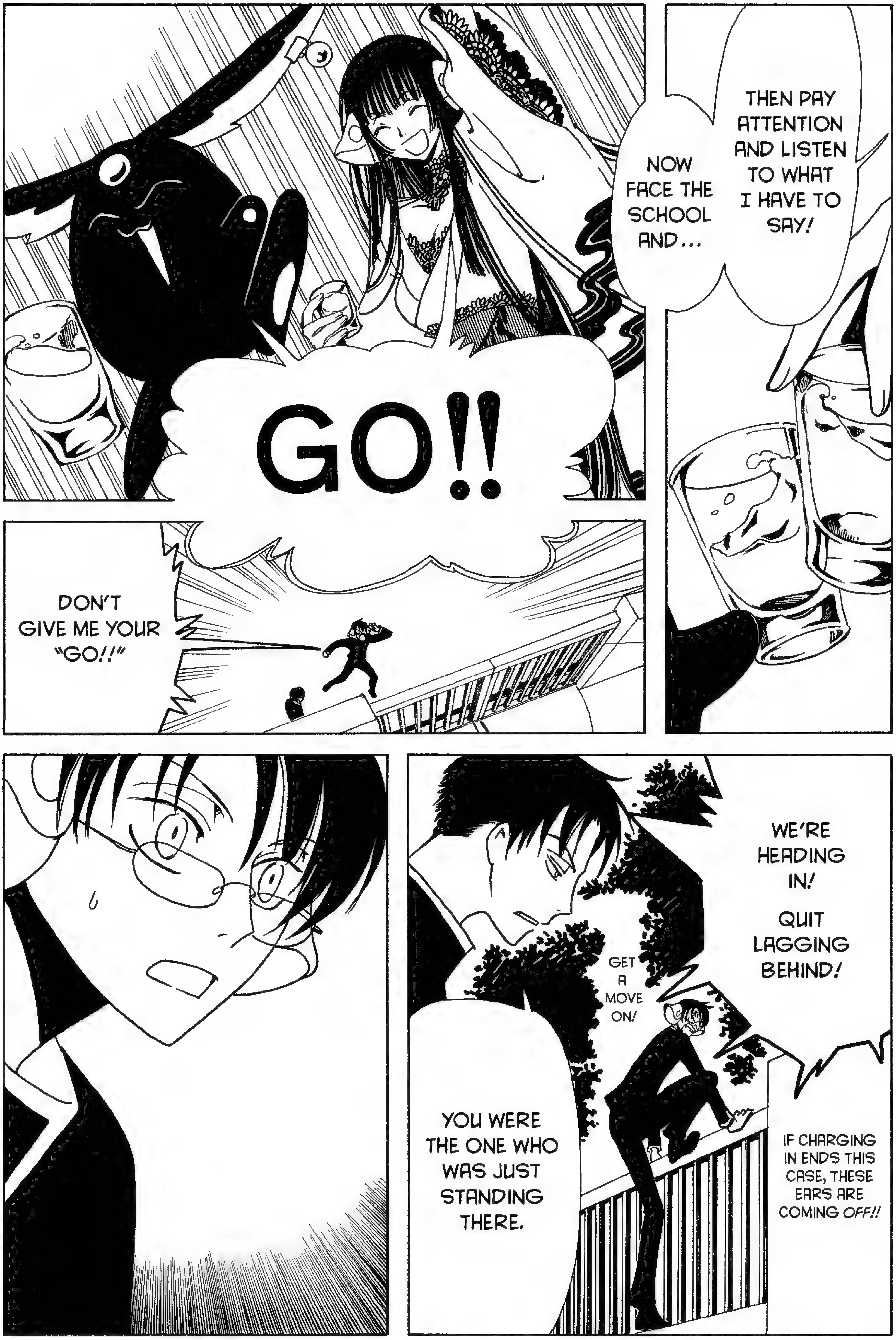

NOW, I'VE PREPARED THESE FOR YOU.
HUH?

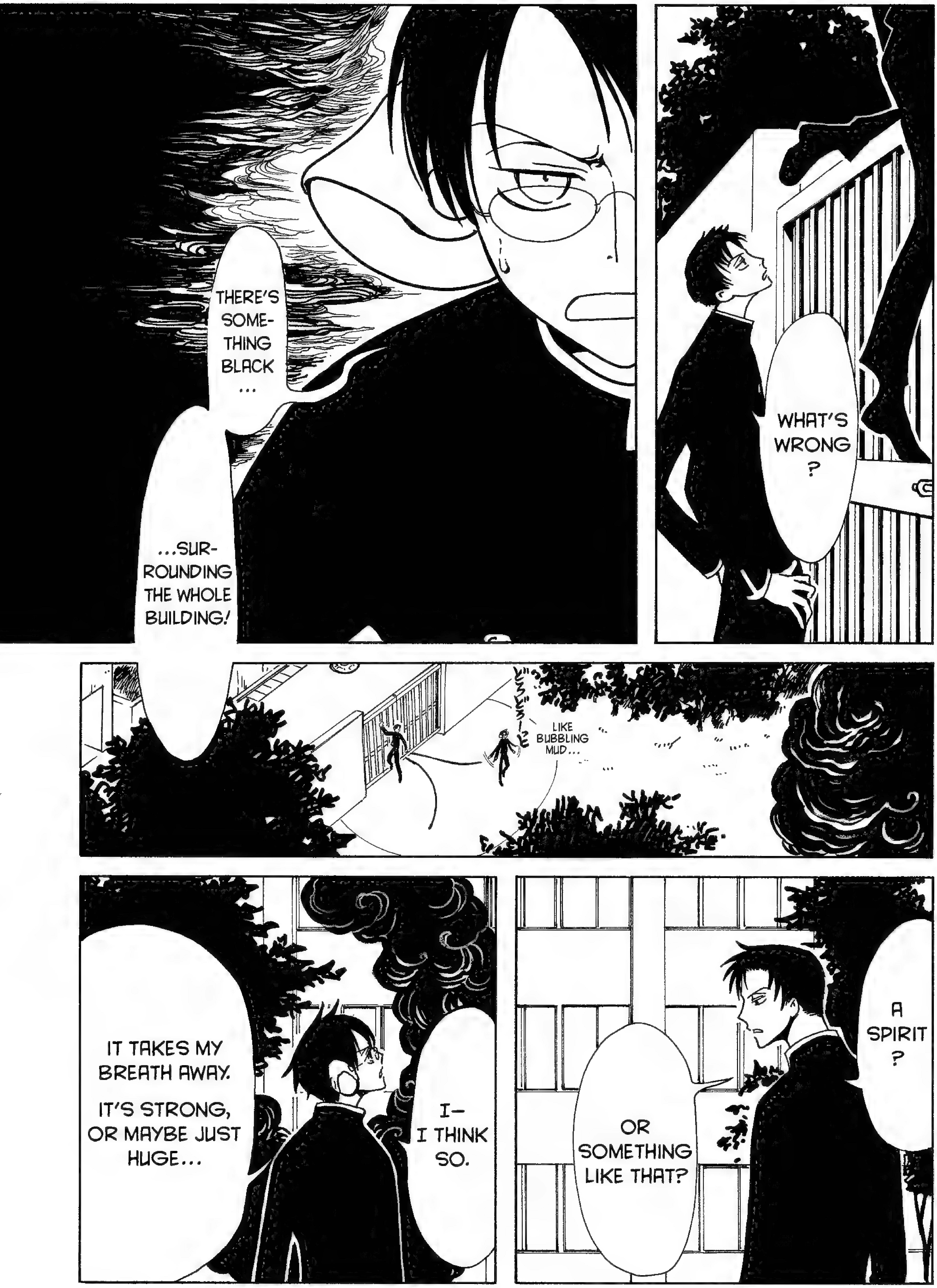

コツ
TAK
YOU'RE LATE.

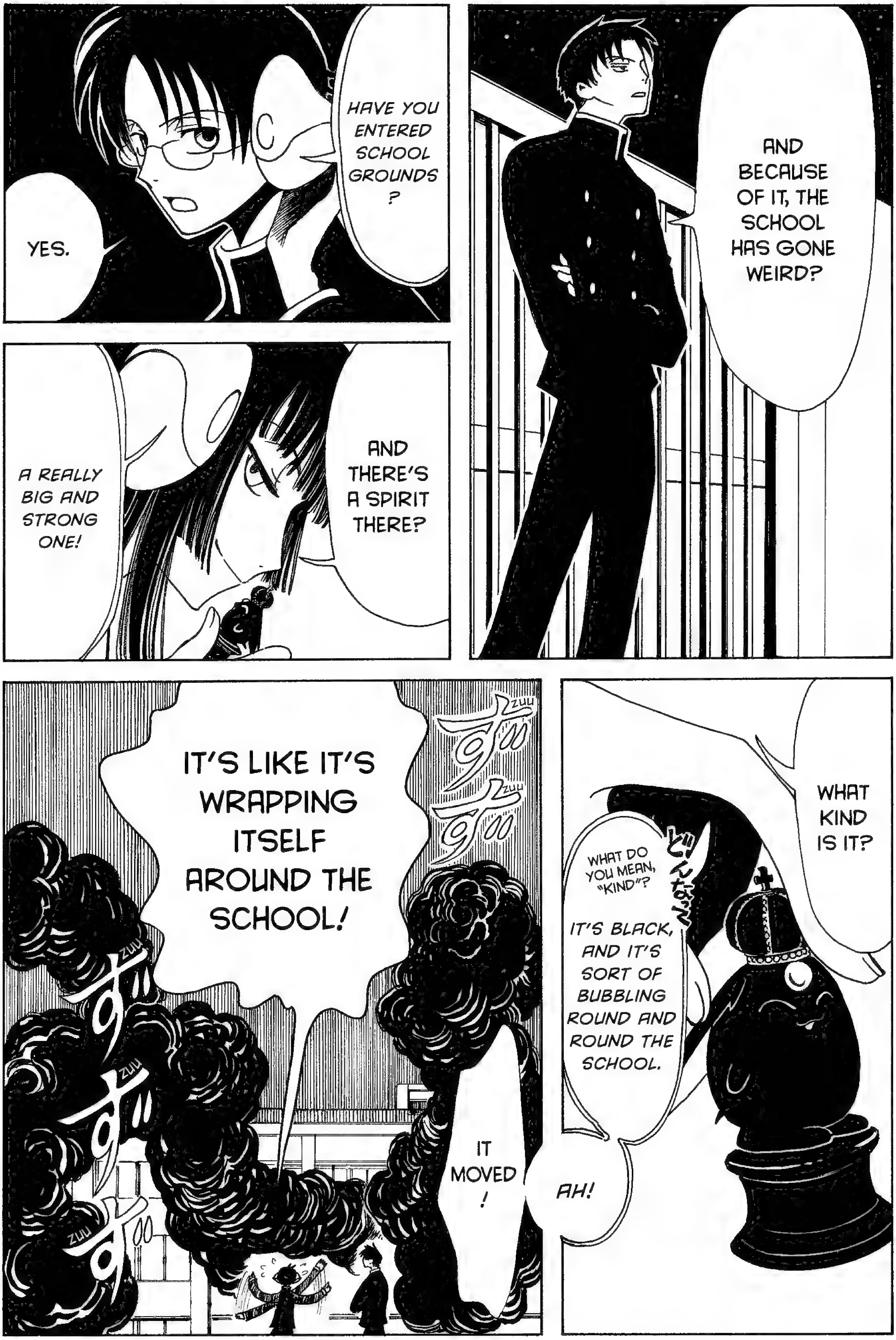

DOOOM
.....
LET'S GO.
TWRL
THESE *EARS* ARE WEIRD, RIGHT?
GO AHEAD!
DO YOUR WORST!
AT LEAST MAKE A LITTLE FUN OF ME!
I DON'T MAKE FUN OF THE ACCESSORIES PEOPLE CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES.
WHO WOULD *CHOOSE* THIS?!
あほ
YA FOOL!!

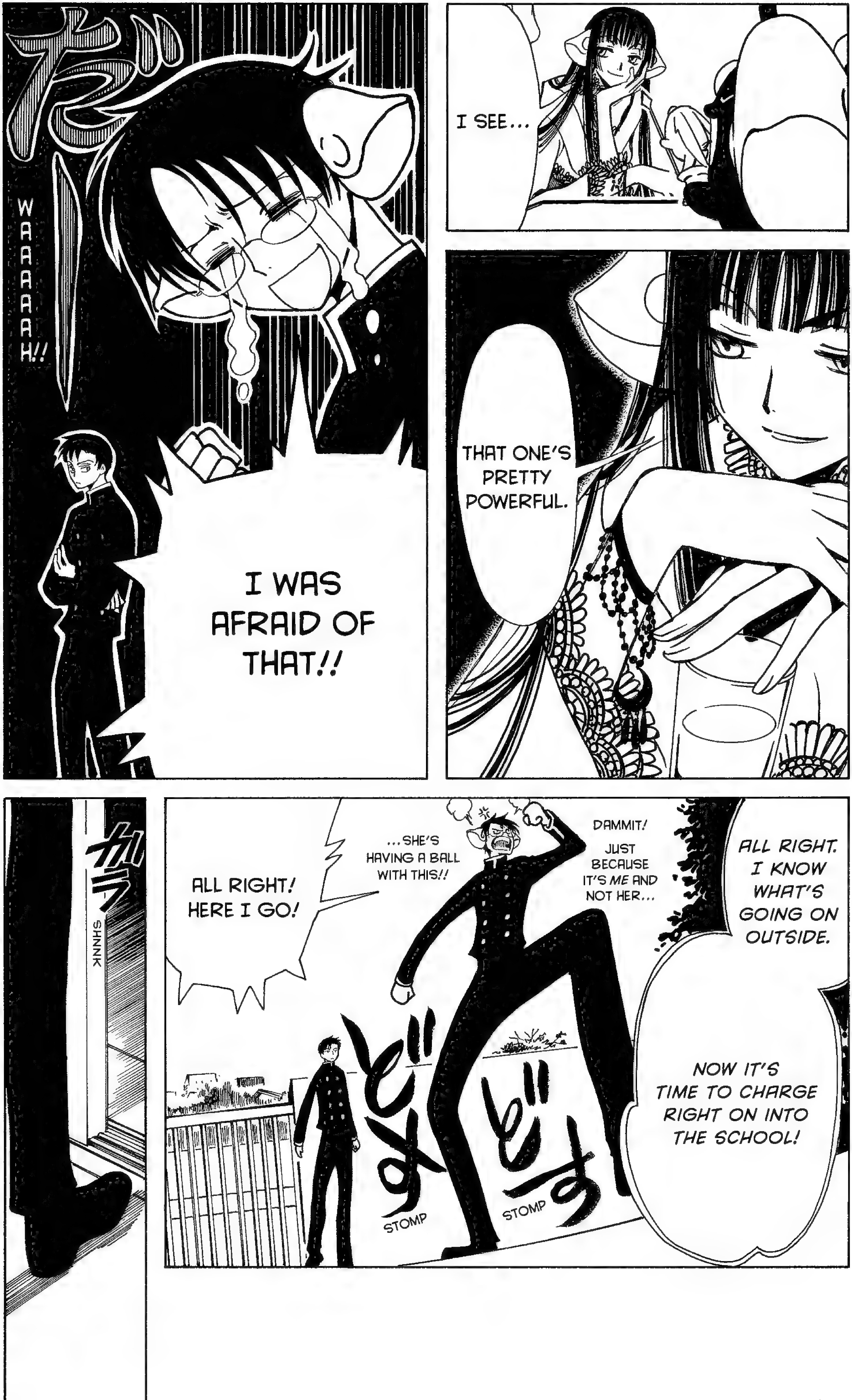

NO WAY!!
WHY DO I HAVE TO WALK AROUND WITH THESE STUPID-LOOKING EARS ON?!
THEY'RE LIKE HEADPHONES.
EVEN IF WE'RE SEPARATED BY LONG DISTANCES, YOU CAN STILL HEAR MY VOICE.
FYUUU
A CITY WITHOUT PEOPLE
THEN WHY DON'T WE JUST USE NORMAL HEADPHONES?
ち? CHIP
ち? CHIP
THESE *AREN'T* HEADPHONES.
EVEN IF THEY AREN'T, YOU SHOULD HAVE *SOMETHING* ELSE THAT CAN WORK!
THERE ONCE WAS A CITY WITHOUT ANY PEOPLE IN IT. ♥
CITY WITHOUT PEOPLE
NO!
THESE ARE BEST.
ちい! CHIII!!
WHY?!

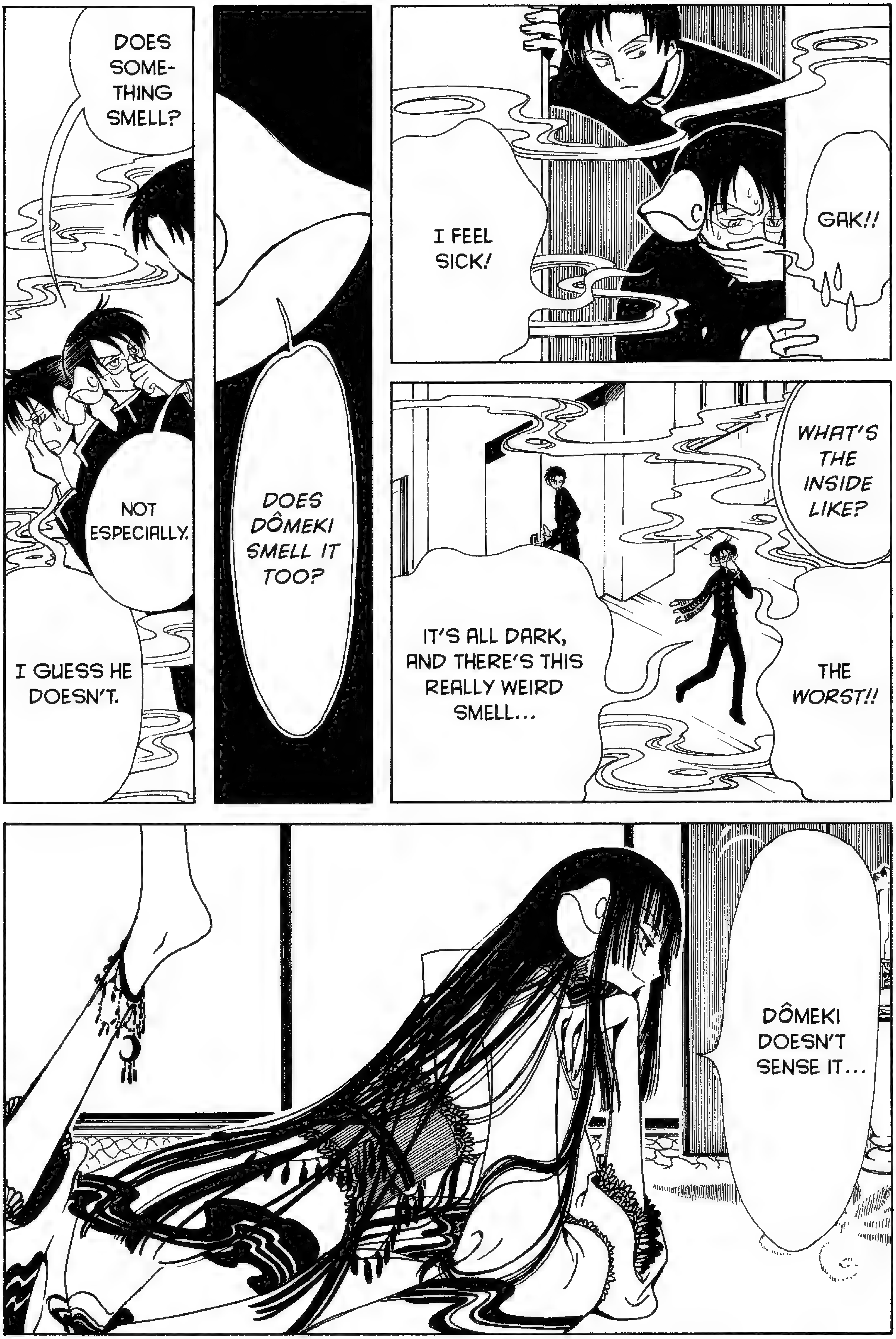

BECAUSE THEY'RE SO MUCH FUN!! ♥
I HAVE TO ADMIT, THEY *ARE* FUN.
I DON'T NEED TO HEAR THAT FROM YOU!!
SEE? DÔMEKI APPROVES OF THEM TOO!
HE DOES NOT!!
IT SEEMS THAT WE'RE BOTH SENDING AND RECEIVING FINE.
OH!
NEVER TAKE THE EARS OFF!
IF I DON'T GET THE SPELL TO YOU EXACTLY, YOU CAN'T HELP ANYONE!
NOOOOO!

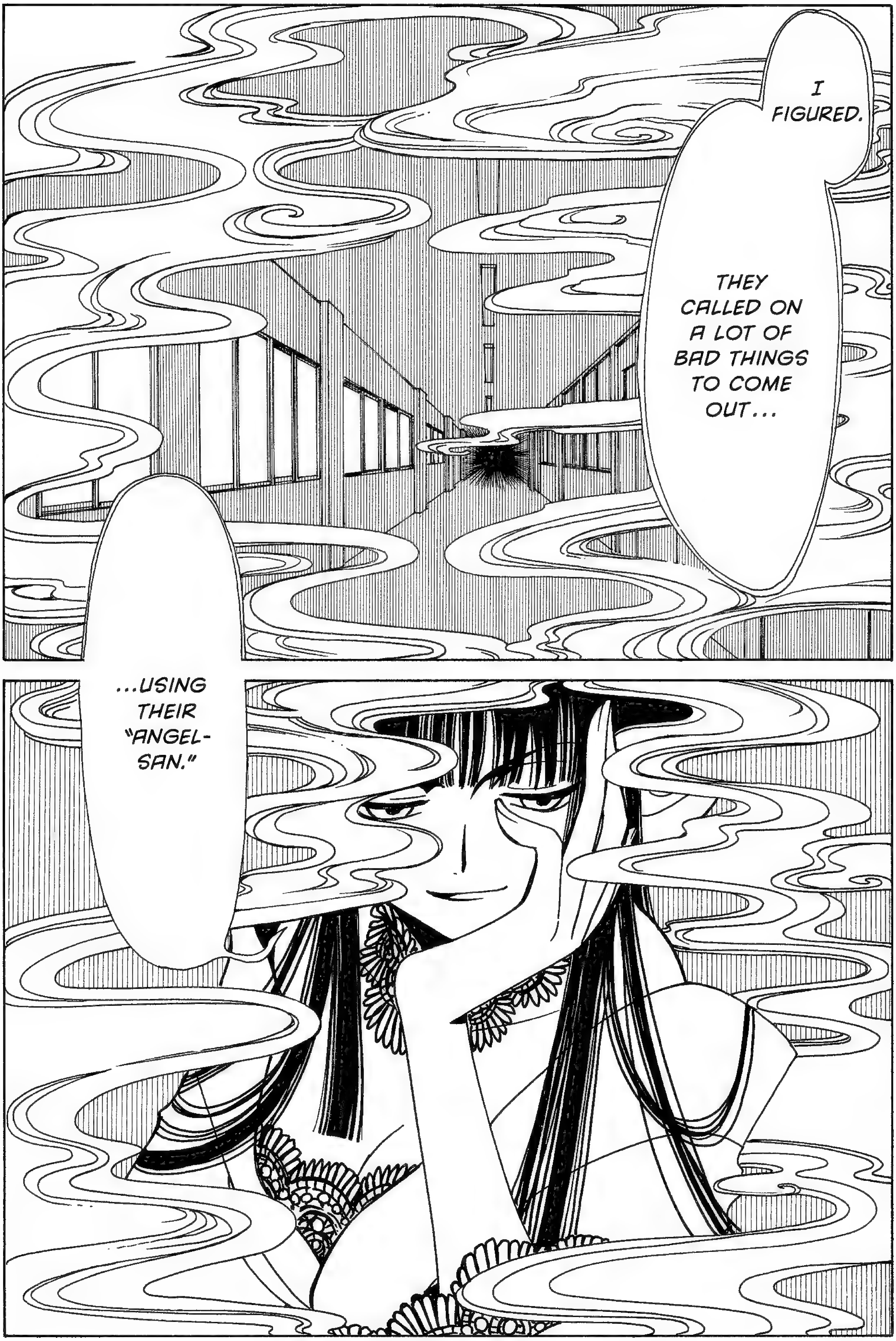

THEN PAY ATTENTION AND LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY!
NOW FACE THE SCHOOL AND...
GO!!
DON'T GIVE ME YOUR "GO!!"
WE'RE HEADING IN!
QUIT LAGGING BEHIND!
GET A MOVE ON!
IF CHARGING IN ENDS THIS CASE, THESE EARS ARE COMING OFF!!
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WAS JUST STANDING THERE.

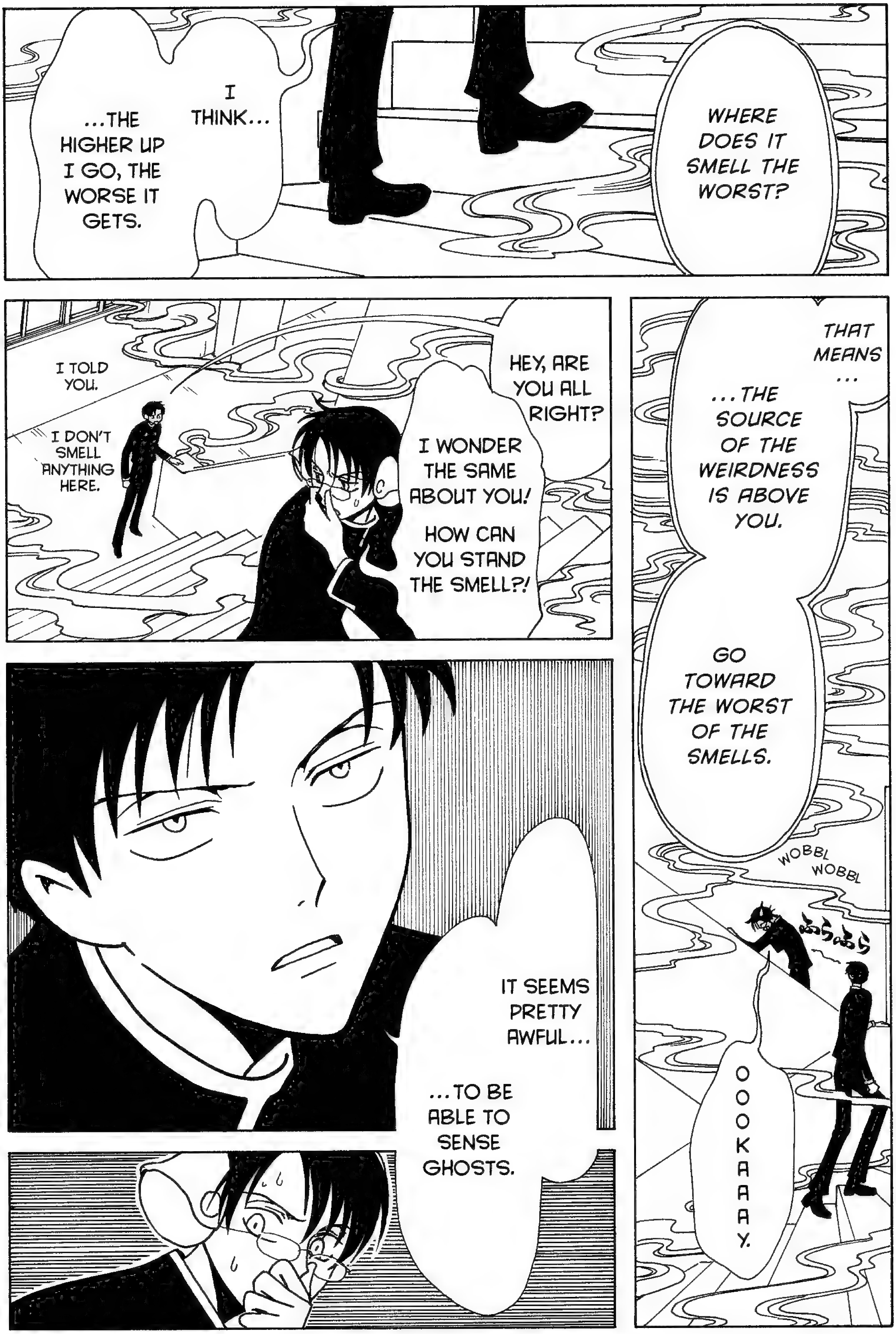

WHAT'S WRONG?
THERE'S SOMETHING BLACK...
...SURROUNDING THE WHOLE BUILDING!
どろどろ～っと
LIKE BUBBLING MUD...
A SPIRIT?
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I— I THINK SO.
IT TAKES MY BREATH AWAY.
IT'S STRONG, OR MAYBE JUST HUGE...

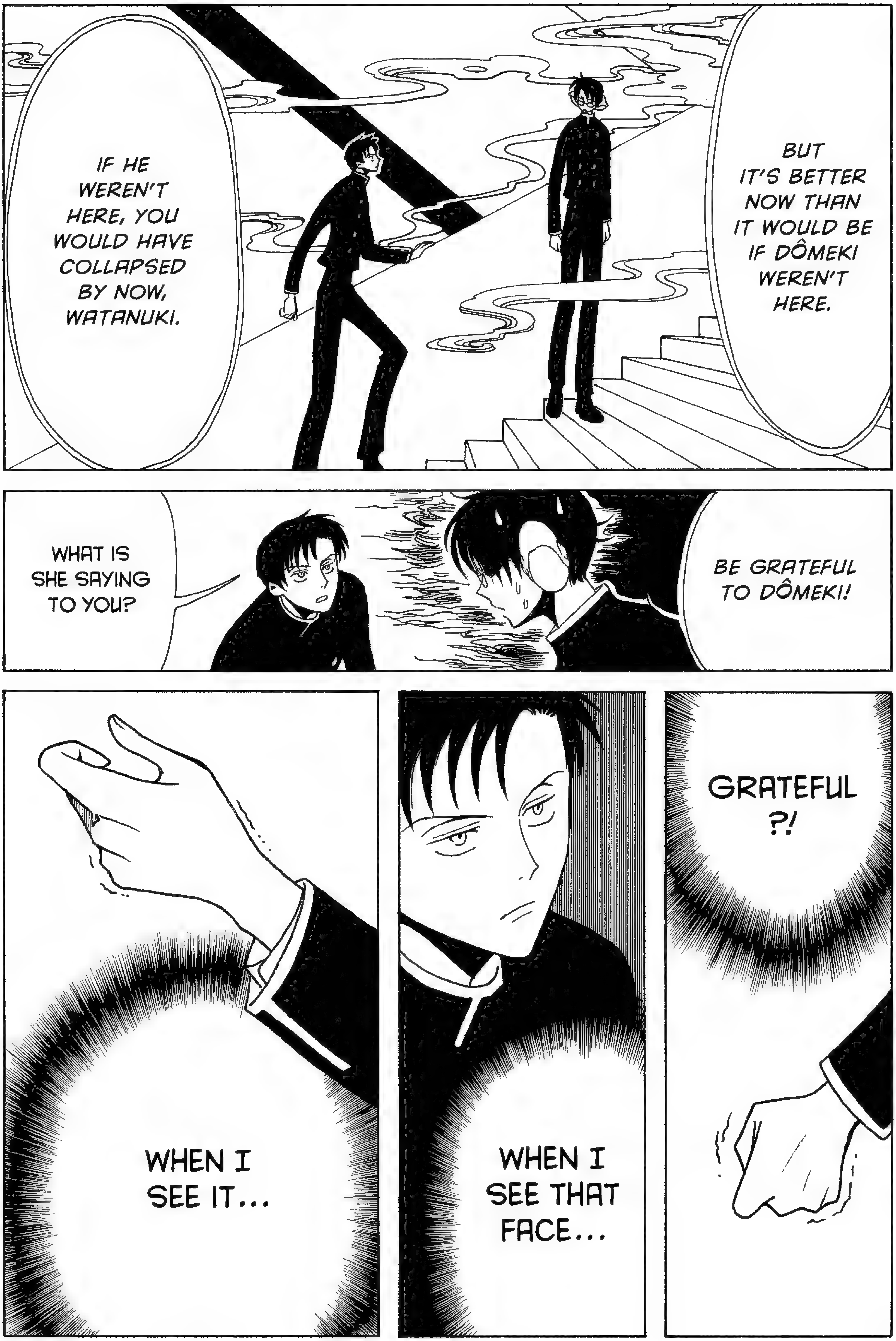

HAVE YOU ENTERED SCHOOL GROUNDS?
YES.
AND THERE'S A SPIRIT THERE?
A REALLY BIG AND STRONG ONE!
AND BECAUSE OF IT, THE SCHOOL HAS GONE WEIRD?
WHAT KIND IS IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "KIND"?
どんなって
IT'S BLACK, AND IT'S SORT OF BUBBLING ROUND AND ROUND THE SCHOOL.
AH!
IT MOVED!
ZUU
ZUU
IT'S LIKE IT'S WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND THE SCHOOL!
ZUU
ZUU

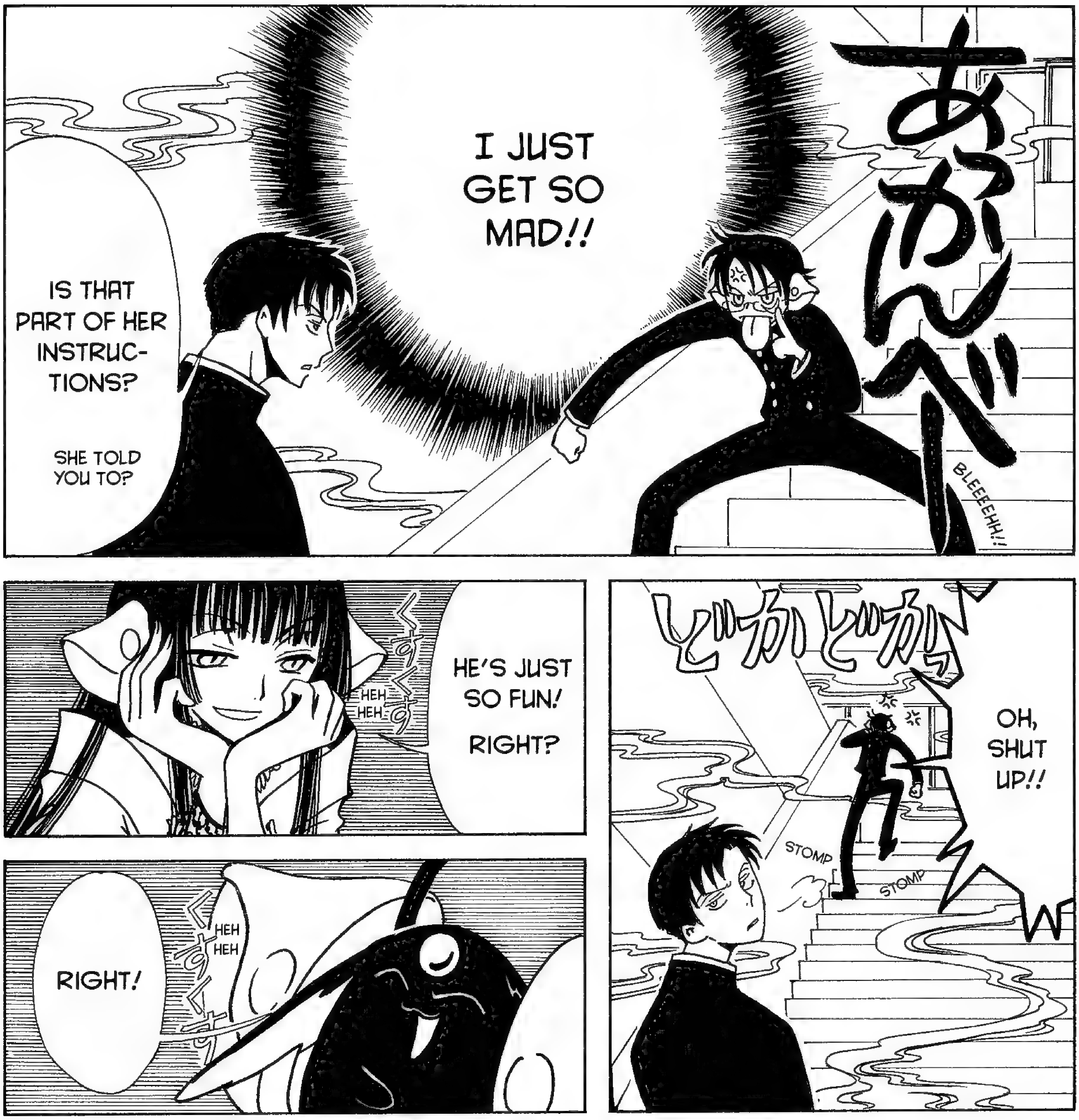

I SEE...
THAT ONE'S PRETTY POWERFUL.
WAAAAAAAH!!
I WAS AFRAID OF THAT!!
ALL RIGHT. I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON OUTSIDE.
NOW IT'S TIME TO CHARGE RIGHT ON INTO THE SCHOOL!
DAMMIT! JUST BECAUSE IT'S *ME* AND NOT HER...
...SHE'S HAVING A BALL WITH THIS!!
ALL RIGHT! HERE I GO!
どす STOMP
どす STOMP
ガラ SHNNK

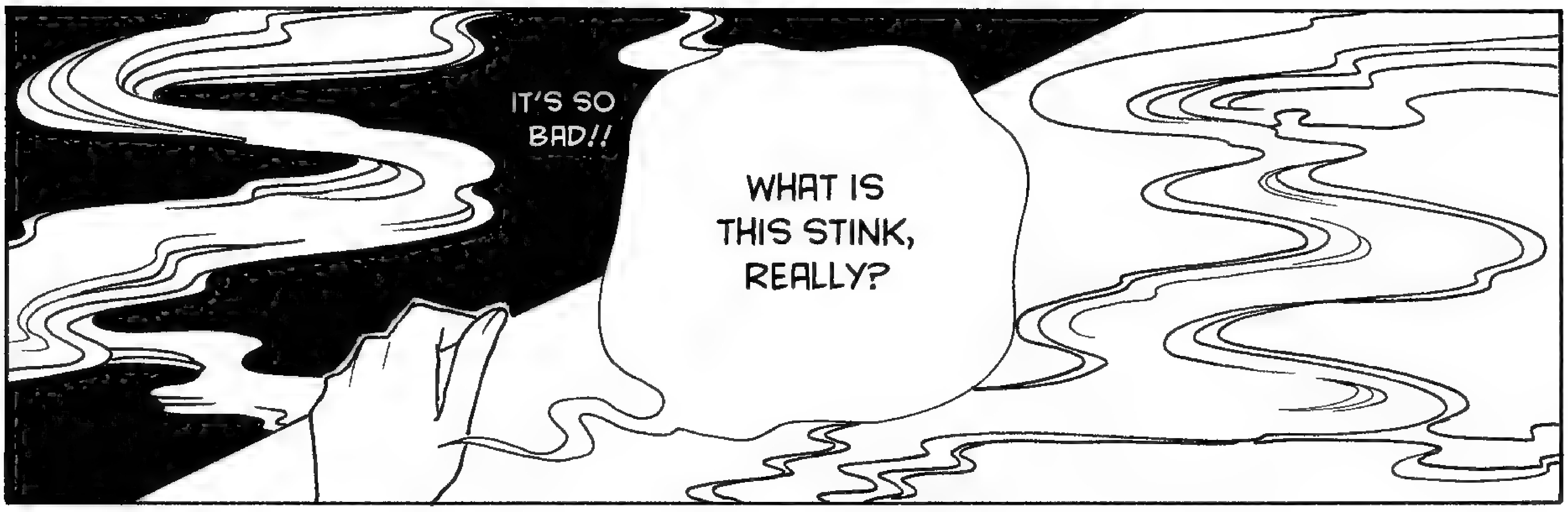

GAK!!
I FEEL SICK!
WHAT'S THE INSIDE LIKE?
IT'S ALL DARK, AND THERE'S THIS REALLY WEIRD SMELL...
THE WORST!!
DOES DÔMEKI SMELL IT TOO?
DOES SOME-THING SMELL?
NOT ESPECIALLY.
I GUESS HE DOESN'T.
DÔMEKI DOESN'T SENSE IT...

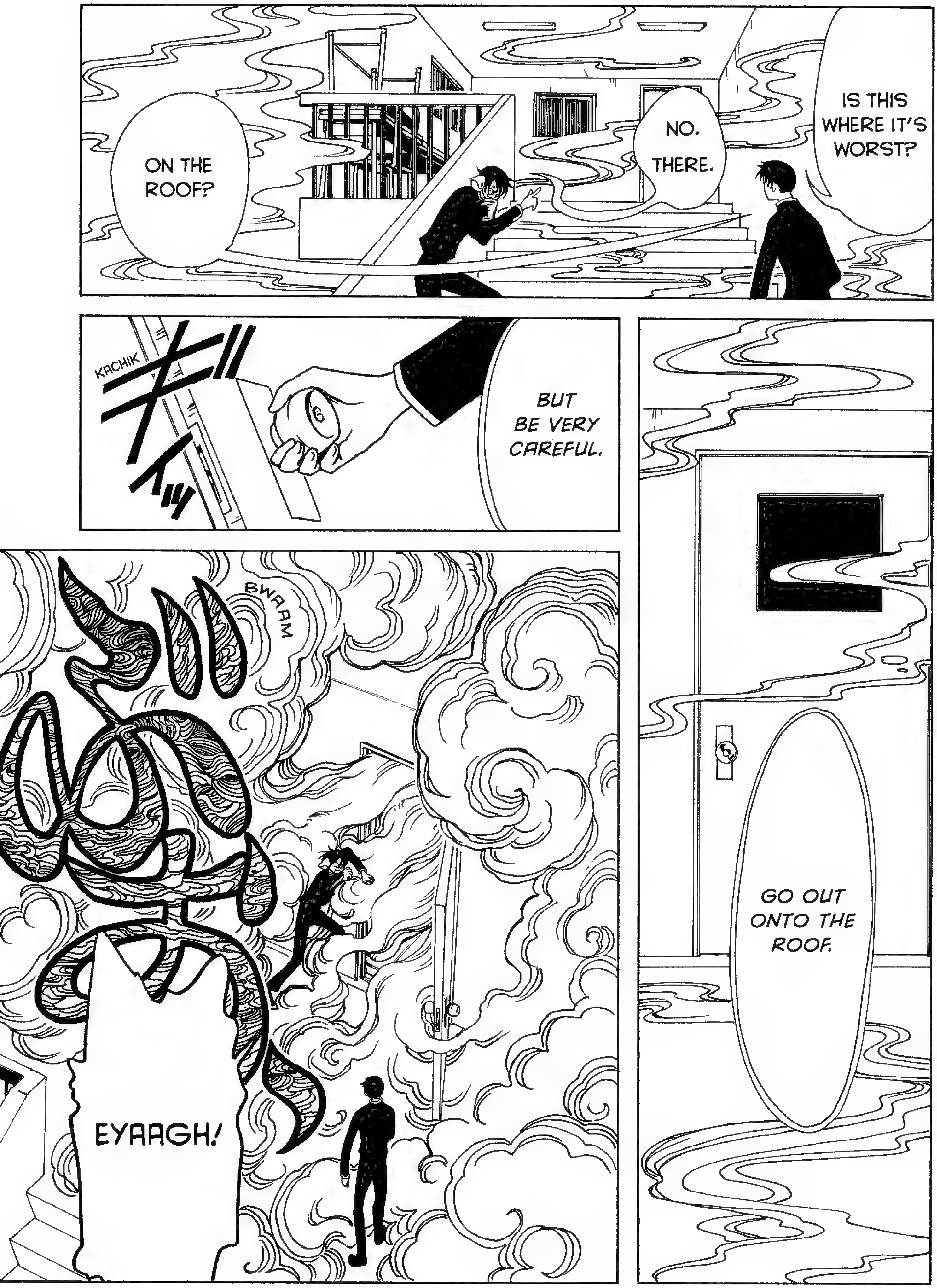

I FIGURED.
THEY CALLED ON A LOT OF BAD THINGS TO COME OUT...
...USING THEIR "ANGEL-SAN."

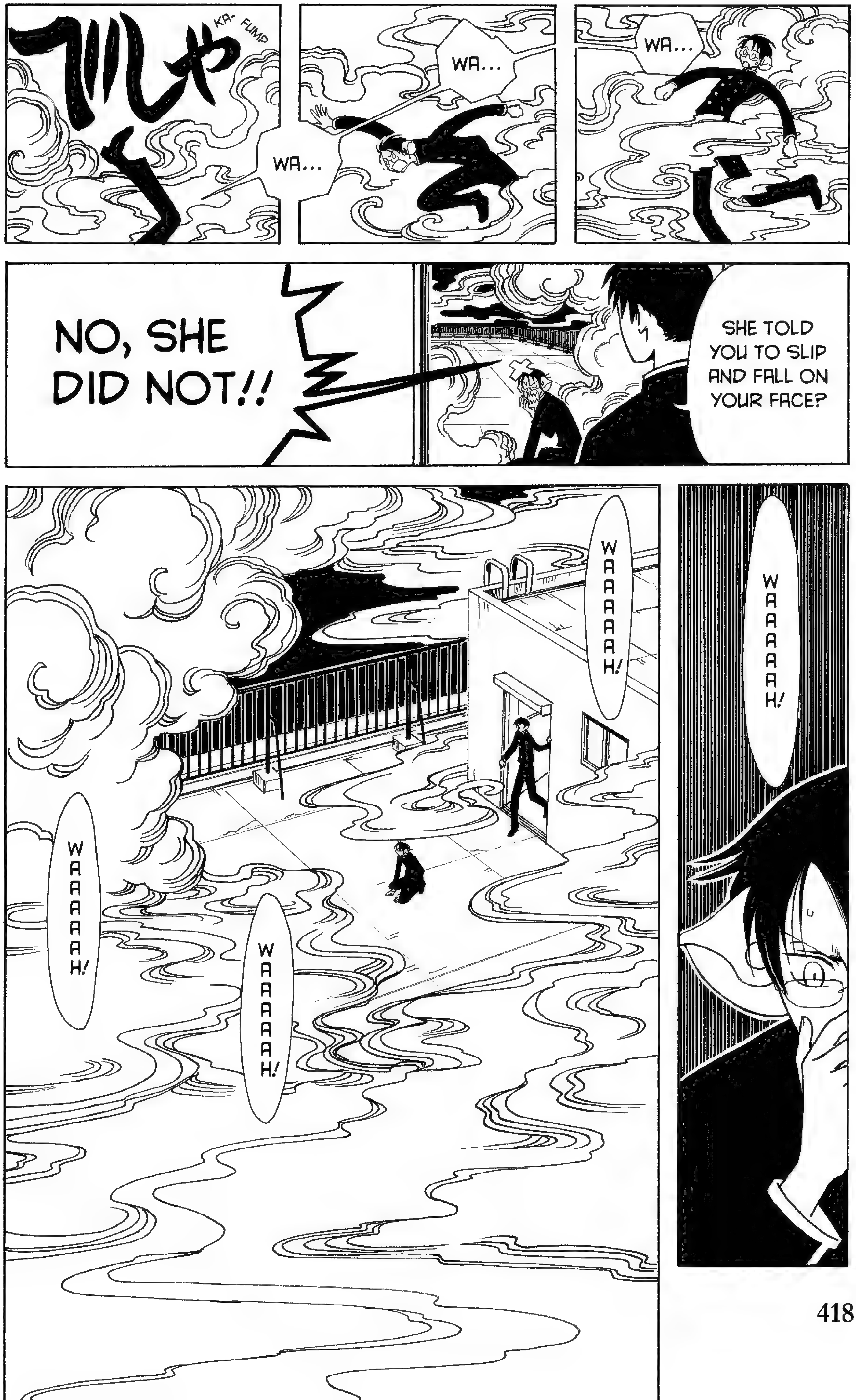

WHERE DOES IT SMELL THE WORST?
I THINK...
...THE HIGHER UP I GO, THE WORSE IT GETS.
THAT MEANS...
...THE SOURCE OF THE WEIRDNESS IS ABOVE YOU.
GO TOWARD THE WORST OF THE SMELLS.
WOBBL WOBBL
ふらふら
OOOKAAAY.
HEY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I WONDER THE SAME ABOUT YOU!
HOW CAN YOU STAND THE SMELL?!
I TOLD YOU.
I DON'T SMELL ANYTHING HERE.
IT SEEMS PRETTY AWFUL...
...TO BE ABLE TO SENSE GHOSTS.

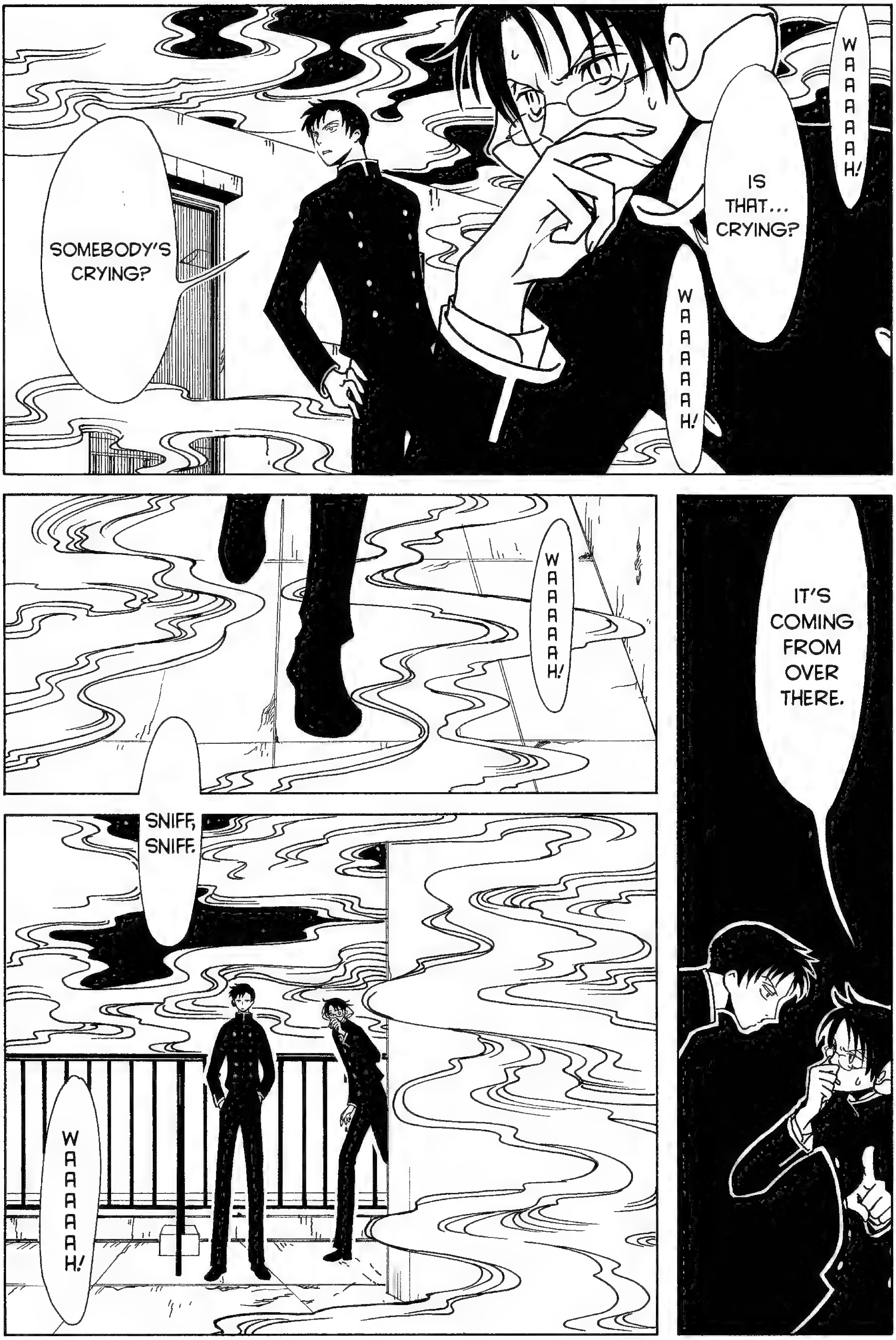

BUT IT'S BETTER NOW THAN IT WOULD BE IF DÔMEKI WEREN'T HERE.
IF HE WEREN'T HERE, YOU WOULD HAVE COLLAPSED BY NOW, WATANUKI.
BE GRATEFUL TO DÔMEKI!
WHAT IS SHE SAYING TO YOU?
GRATEFUL ?!
WHEN I SEE THAT FACE...
WHEN I SEE IT...

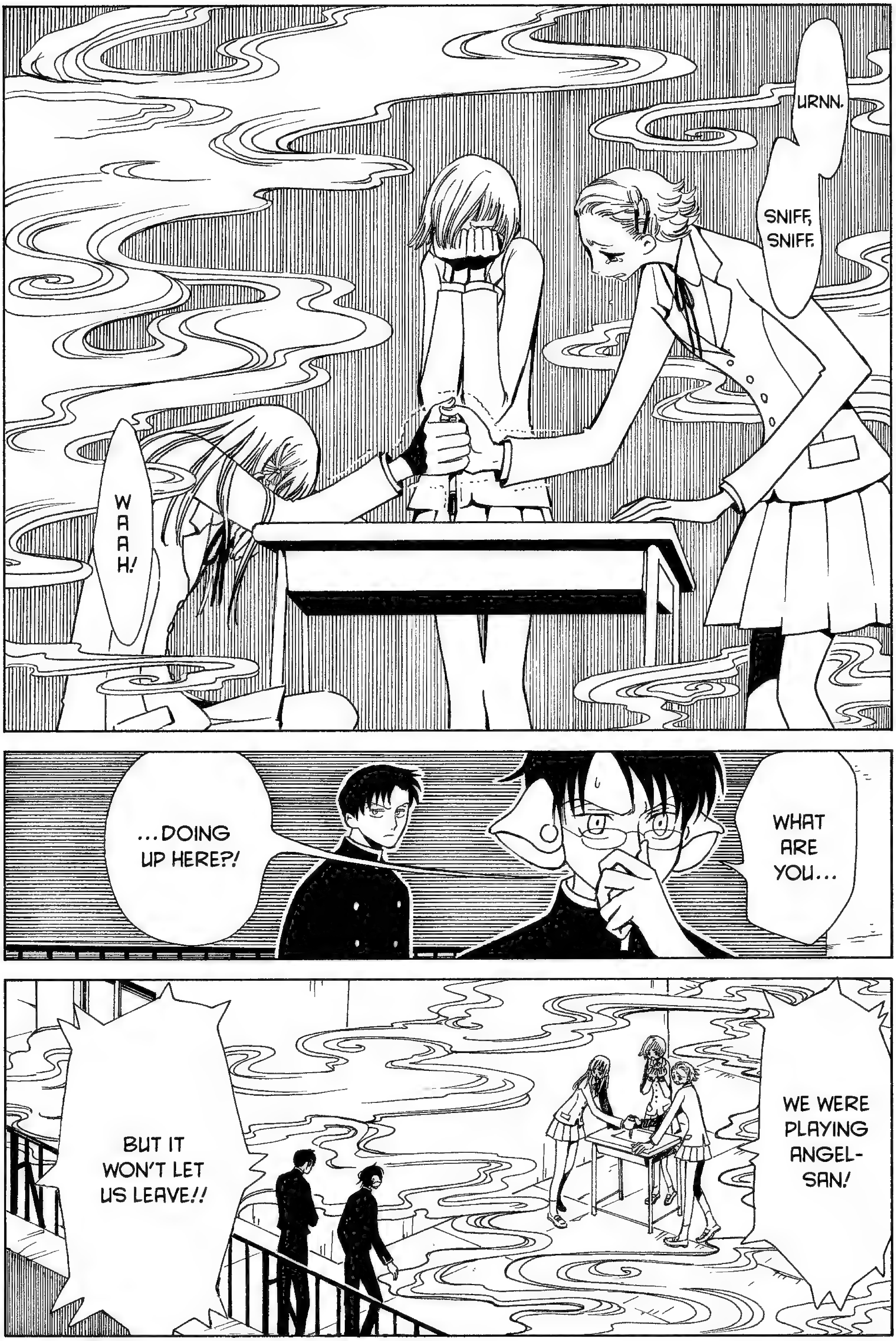

あっかんべー
BLEEEEHH!!
I JUST GET SO MAD!!
IS THAT PART OF HER INSTRUCTIONS?
SHE TOLD YOU TO?
どかどか
OH, SHUT UP!!
STOMP
STOMP
くすくす
HEH HEH
HE'S JUST SO FUN!
RIGHT?
くすくす
HEH HEH
RIGHT!

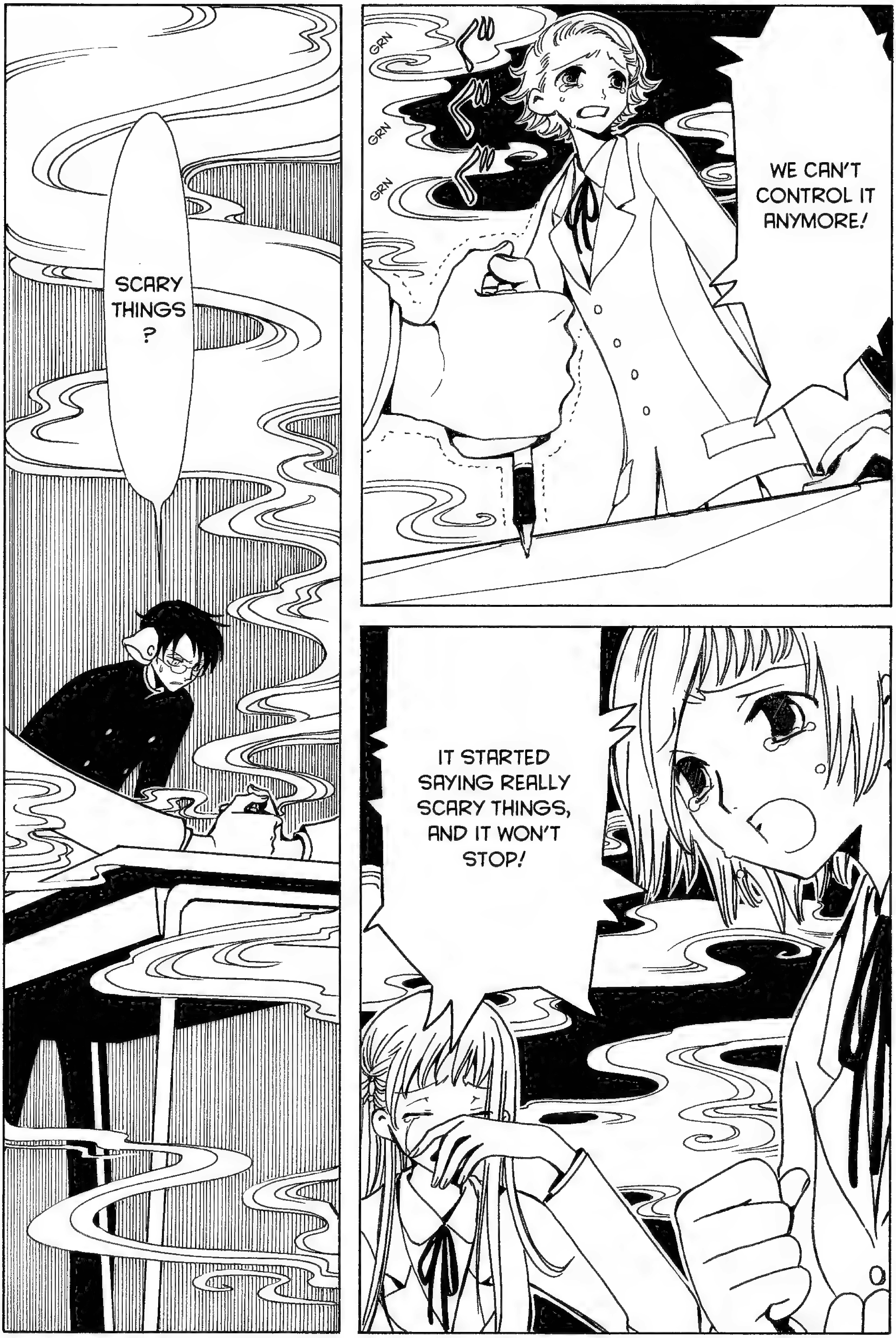

WHAT IS THIS STINK, REALLY?
IT'S SO BAD!!

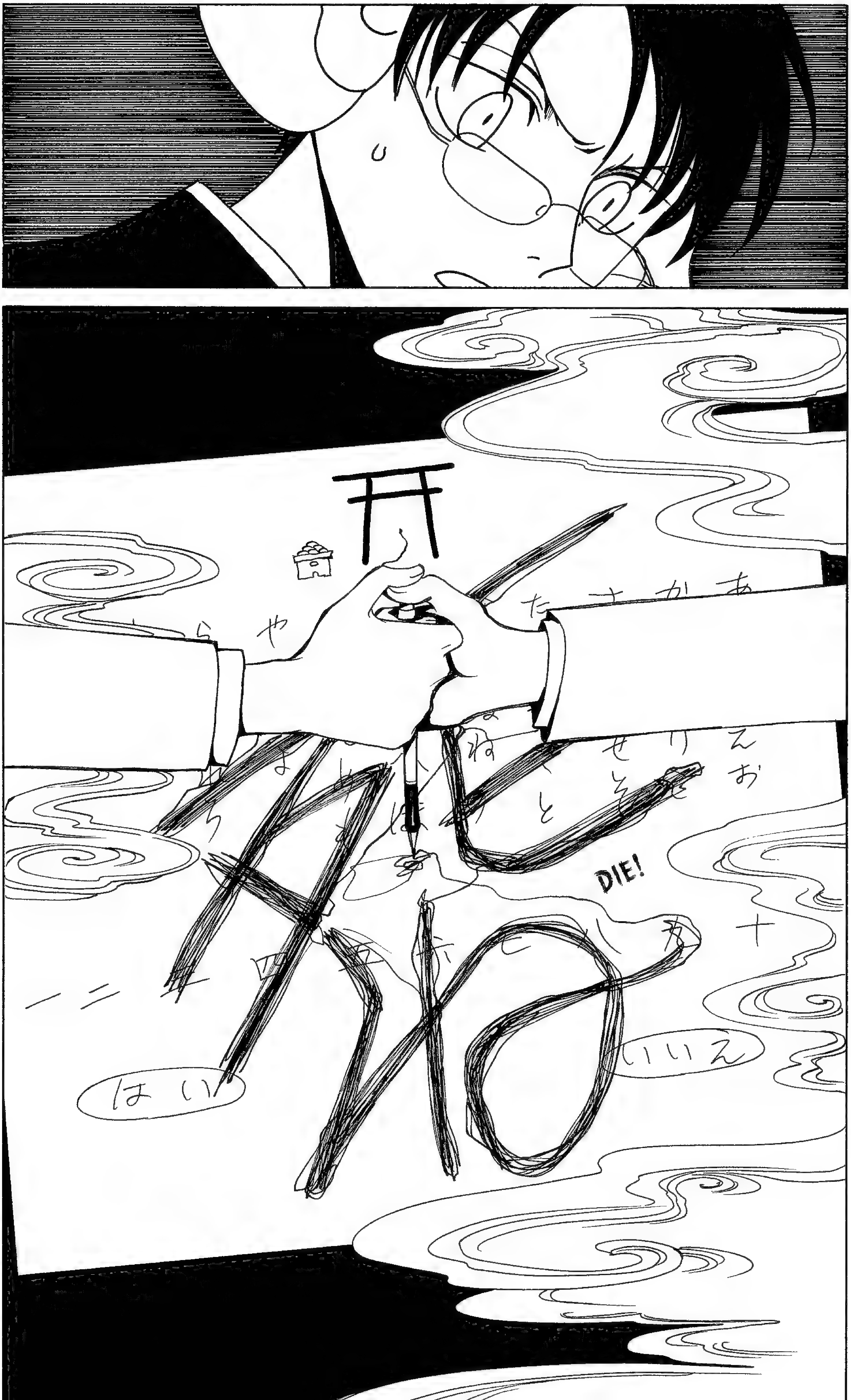

IS THIS WHERE IT'S WORST?
NO. THERE.
ON THE ROOF?
GO OUT ONTO THE ROOF.
BUT BE VERY CAREFUL.
KACHIK
BWAAM
EYAAGH!

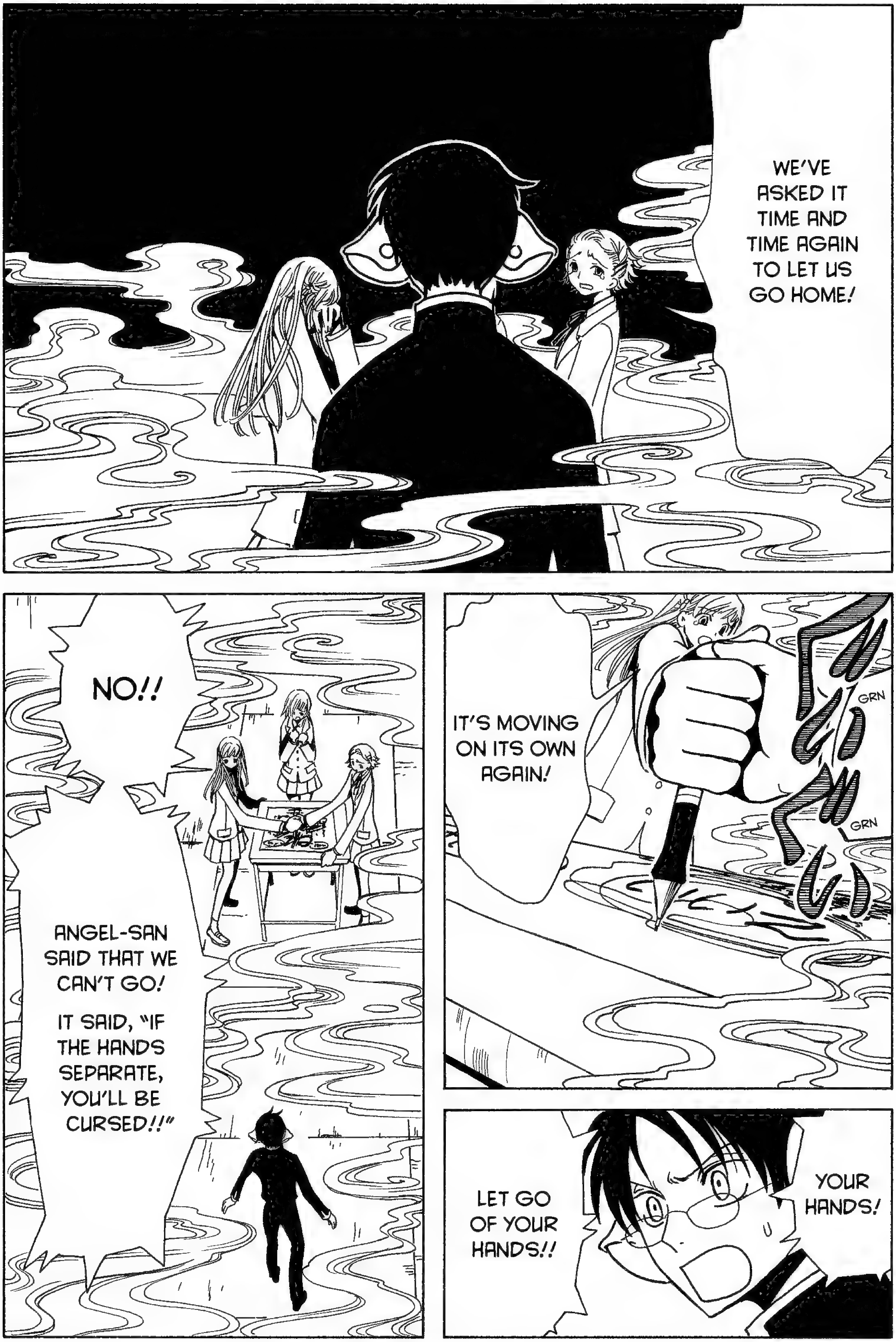

WA...
WA...
WA...
KA-FUMP
SHE TOLD YOU TO SLIP AND FALL ON YOUR FACE?
NO, SHE DID NOT!!
WAAAAAAH!
WAAAAAAH!
WAAAAAAH!
WAAAAAAH!

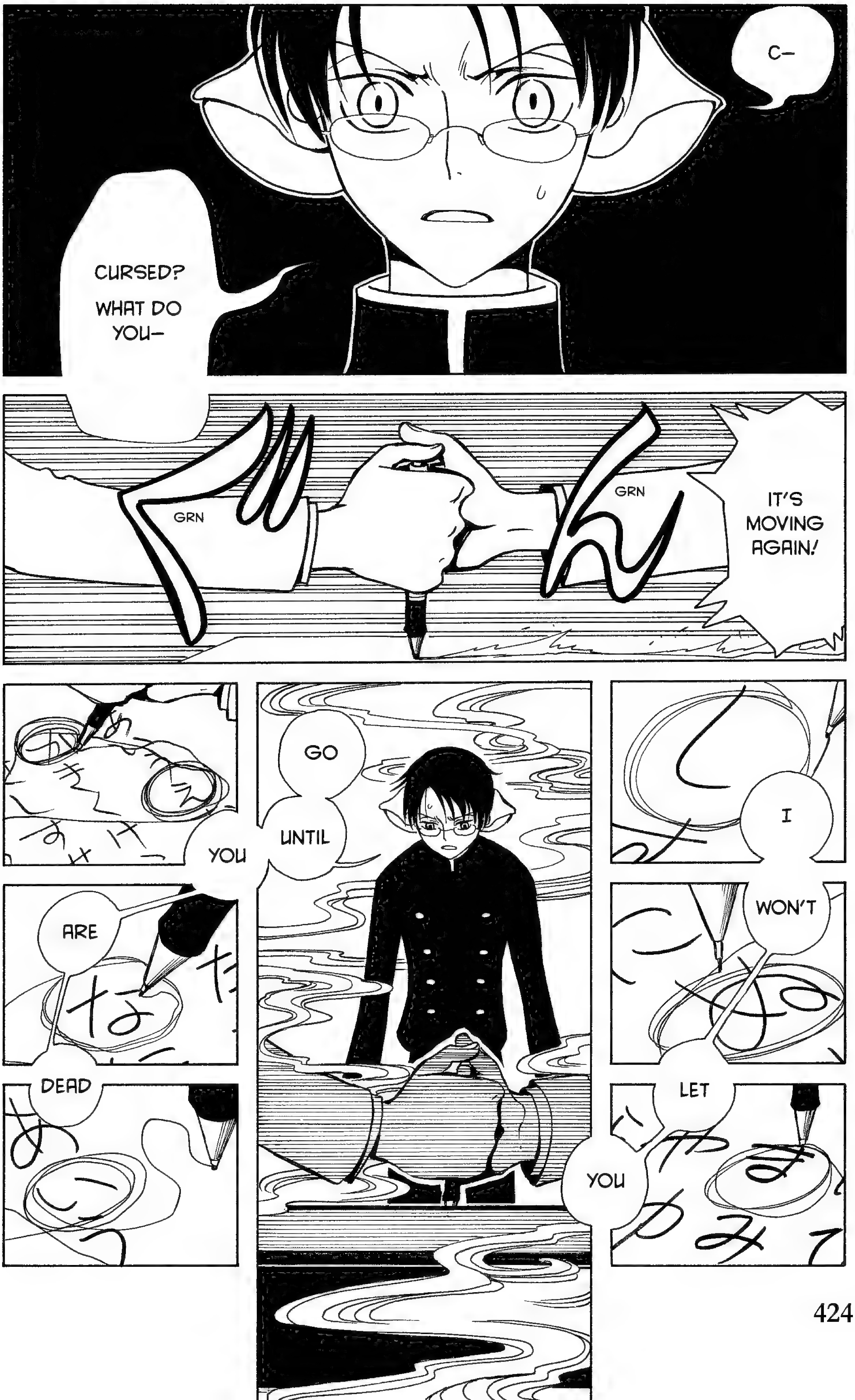

WAAAAAH!
IS THAT... CRYING?
WAAAAAH!
SOMEBODY'S CRYING?
IT'S COMING FROM OVER THERE.
WAAAAAH!
SNIFF, SNIFF.
WAAAAAH!


URNN.
SNIFF, SNIFF.
WAAH!
WHAT ARE YOU...
...DOING UP HERE?!
WE WERE PLAYING ANGEL-SAN!
BUT IT WON'T LET US LEAVE!!

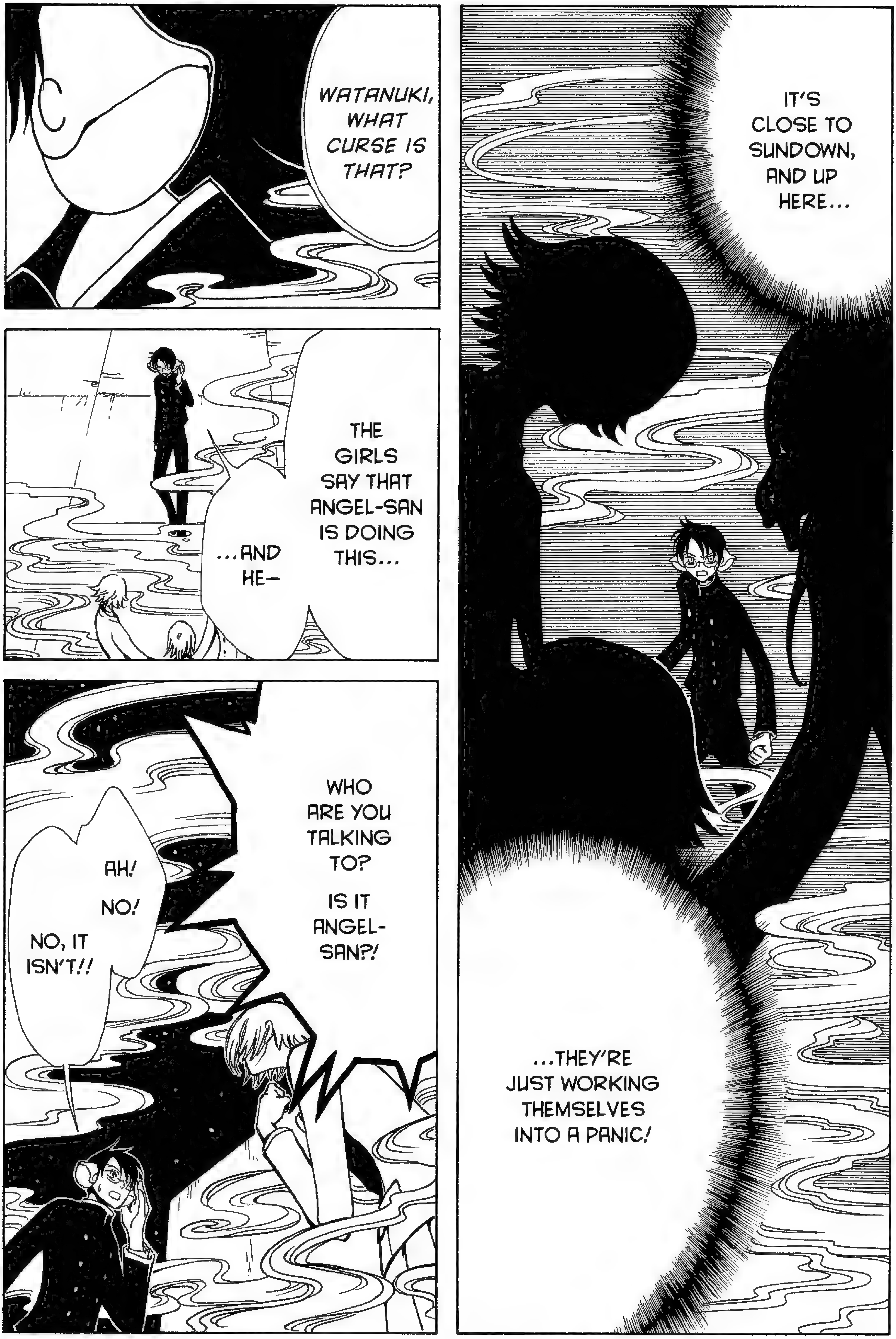

GRN
GRN
GRN
WE CAN'T CONTROL IT ANYMORE!
IT STARTED SAYING REALLY SCARY THINGS, AND IT WON'T STOP!
SCARY THINGS?

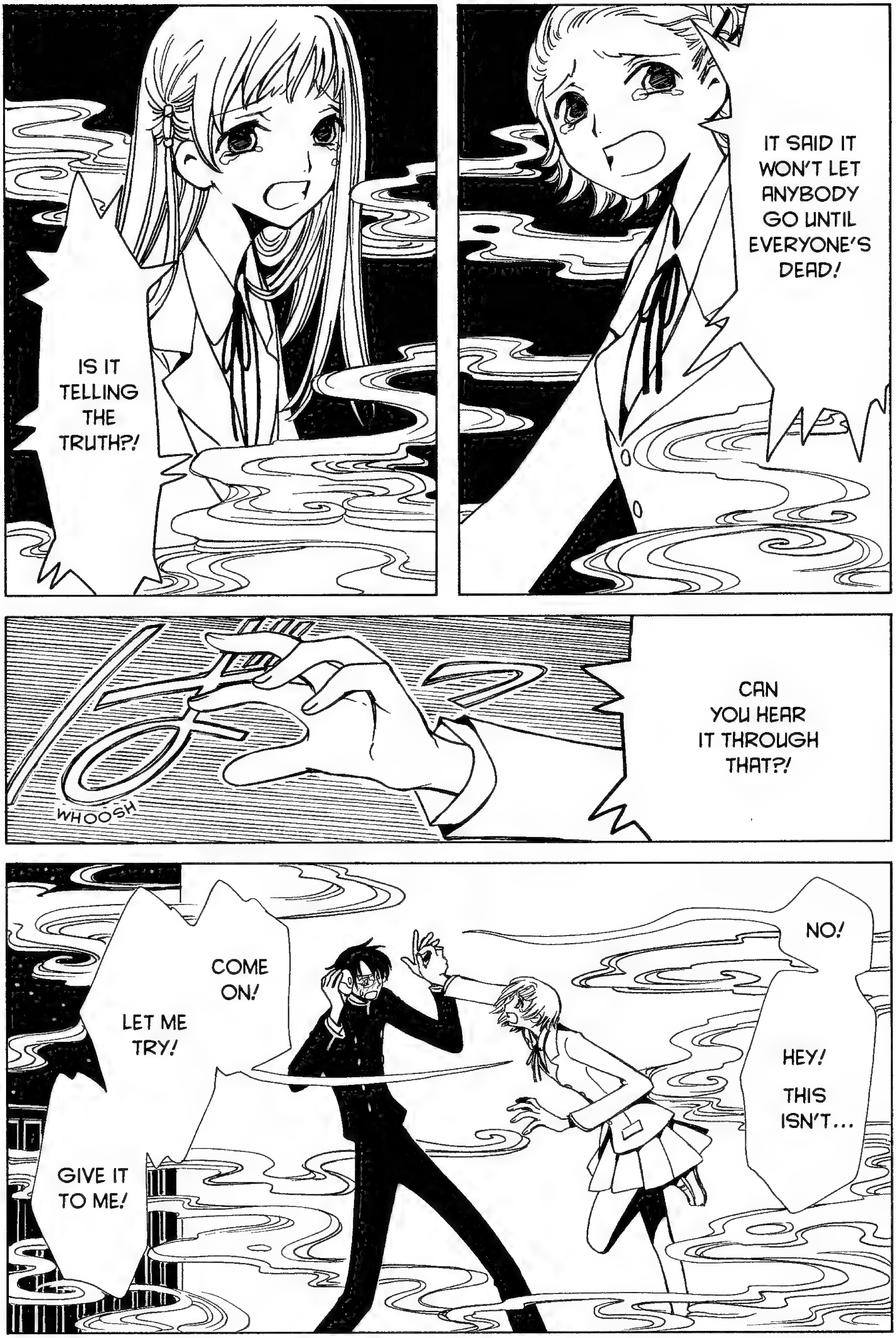

DIE!
あかさた
やら
はい
いいえ

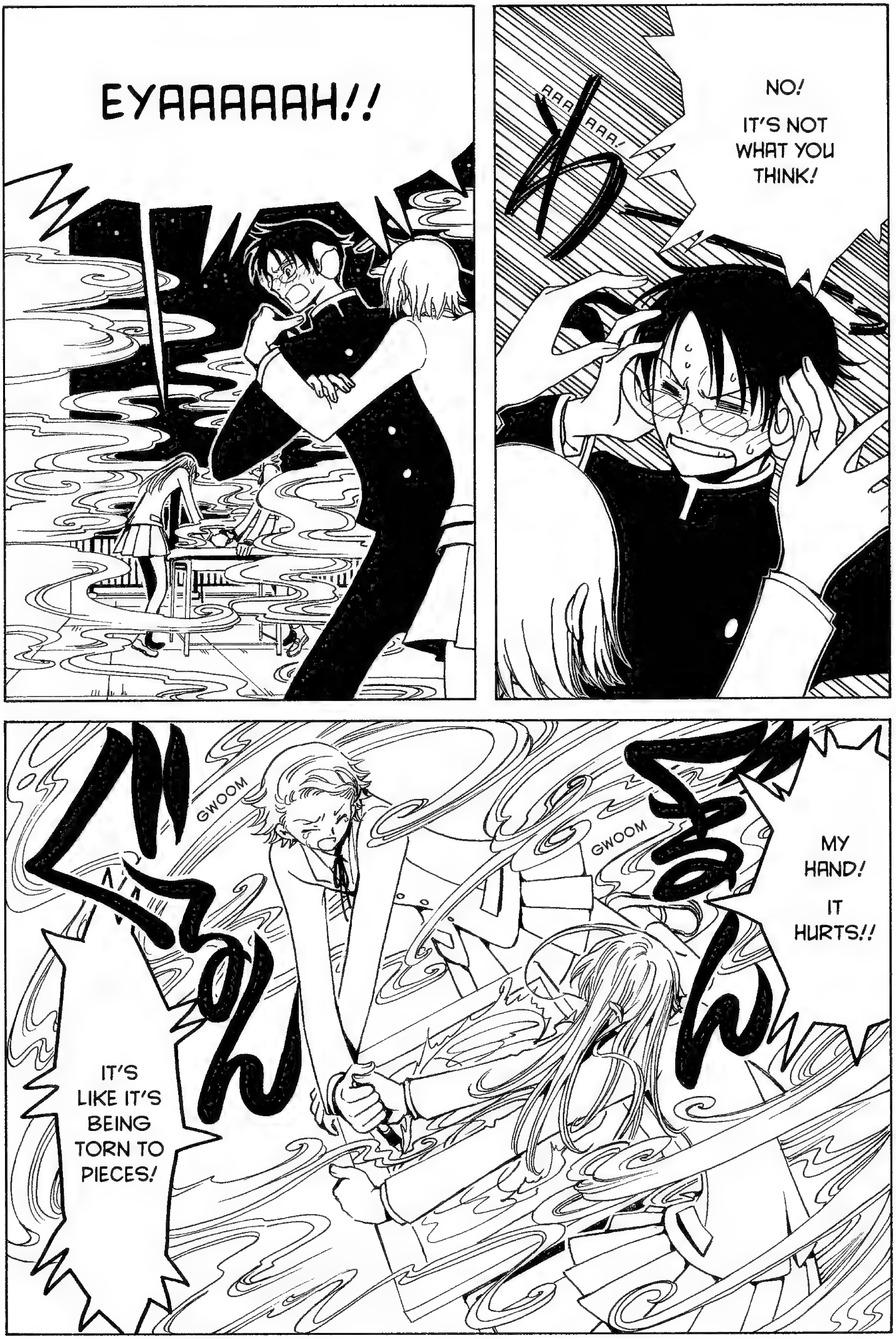

WE'VE ASKED IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN TO LET US GO HOME!
IT'S MOVING ON ITS OWN AGAIN!
GRN
GRN
YOUR HANDS!
LET GO OF YOUR HANDS!!
NO!!
ANGEL-SAN SAID THAT WE CAN'T GO!
IT SAID, "IF THE HANDS SEPARATE, YOU'LL BE CURSED!!"

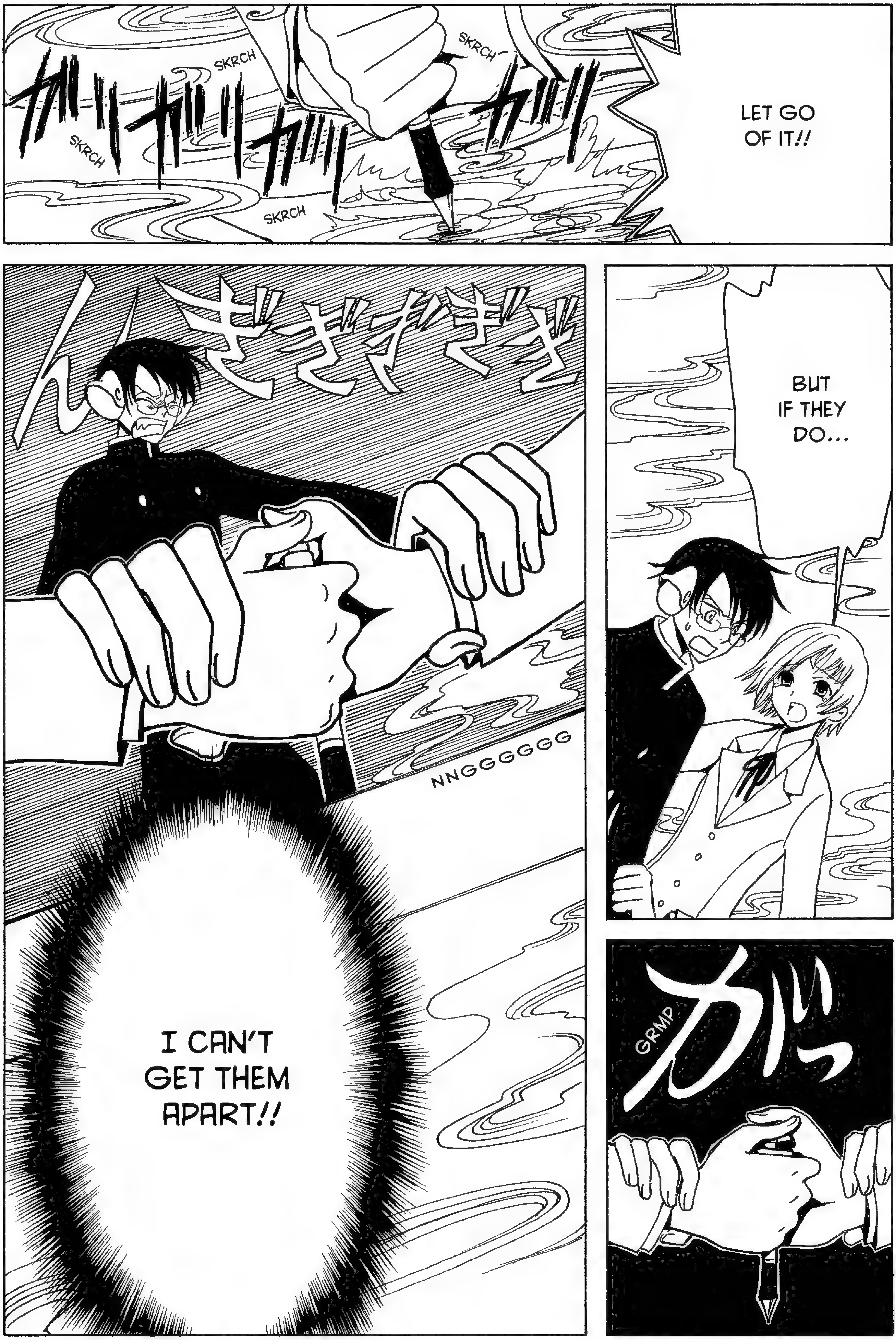

C—
CURSED? WHAT DO YOU—
IT'S MOVING AGAIN!
GRN
GRN
I
WON'T
LET
YOU
GO
UNTIL
YOU
ARE
DEAD

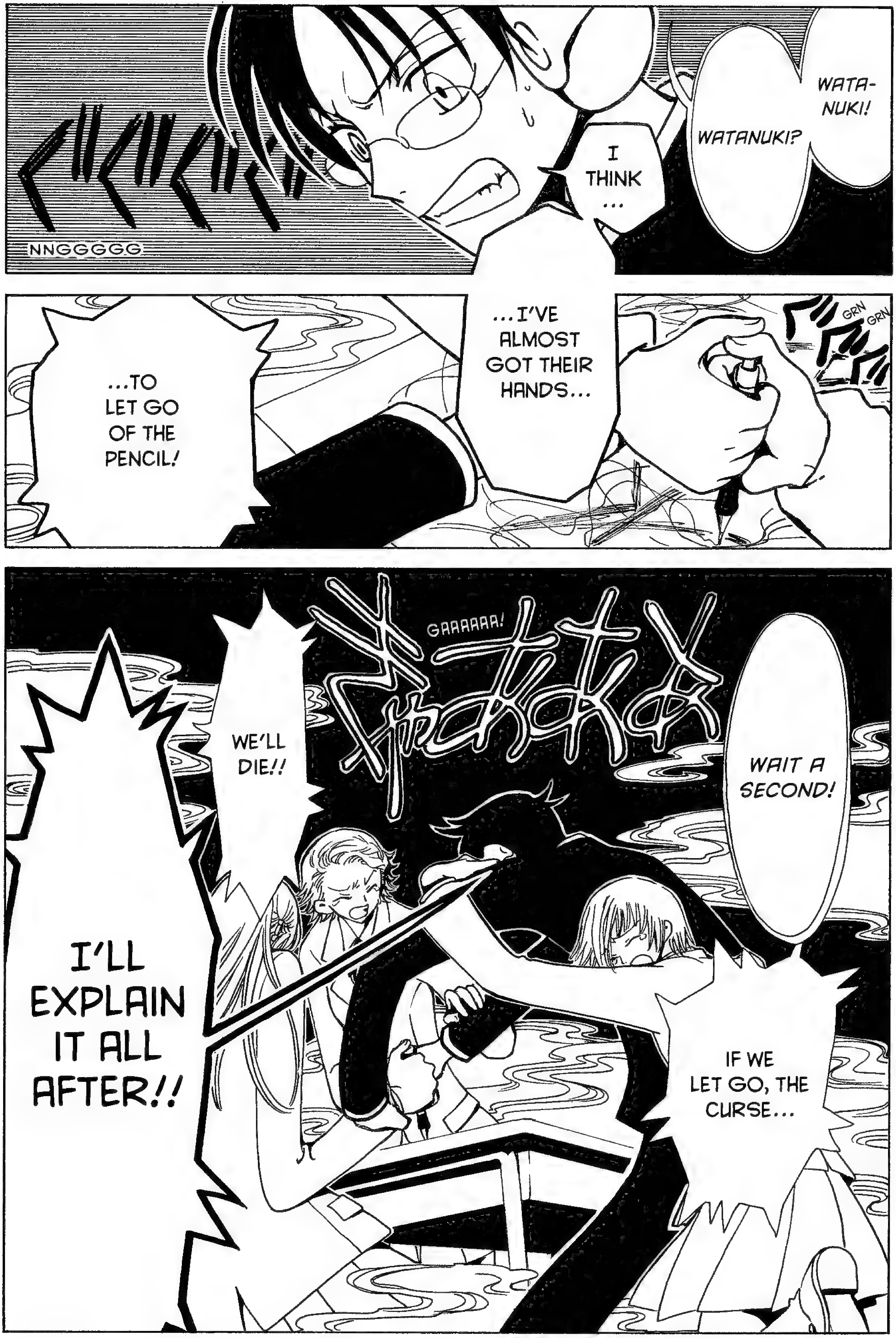
I CAN'T TAKE THIS ANYMORE!!
I'VE HEARD OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
THEY'RE MOVING IT ON THEIR OWN...
...BUT THEY DON'T REALIZE THAT THEY'RE DOING IT!
WHEN ONE ISN'T MOVING, THE OTHER IS, SO THEY BOTH FEEL THAT SOME STRANGE POWER IS BEHIND THE MOVEMENT!

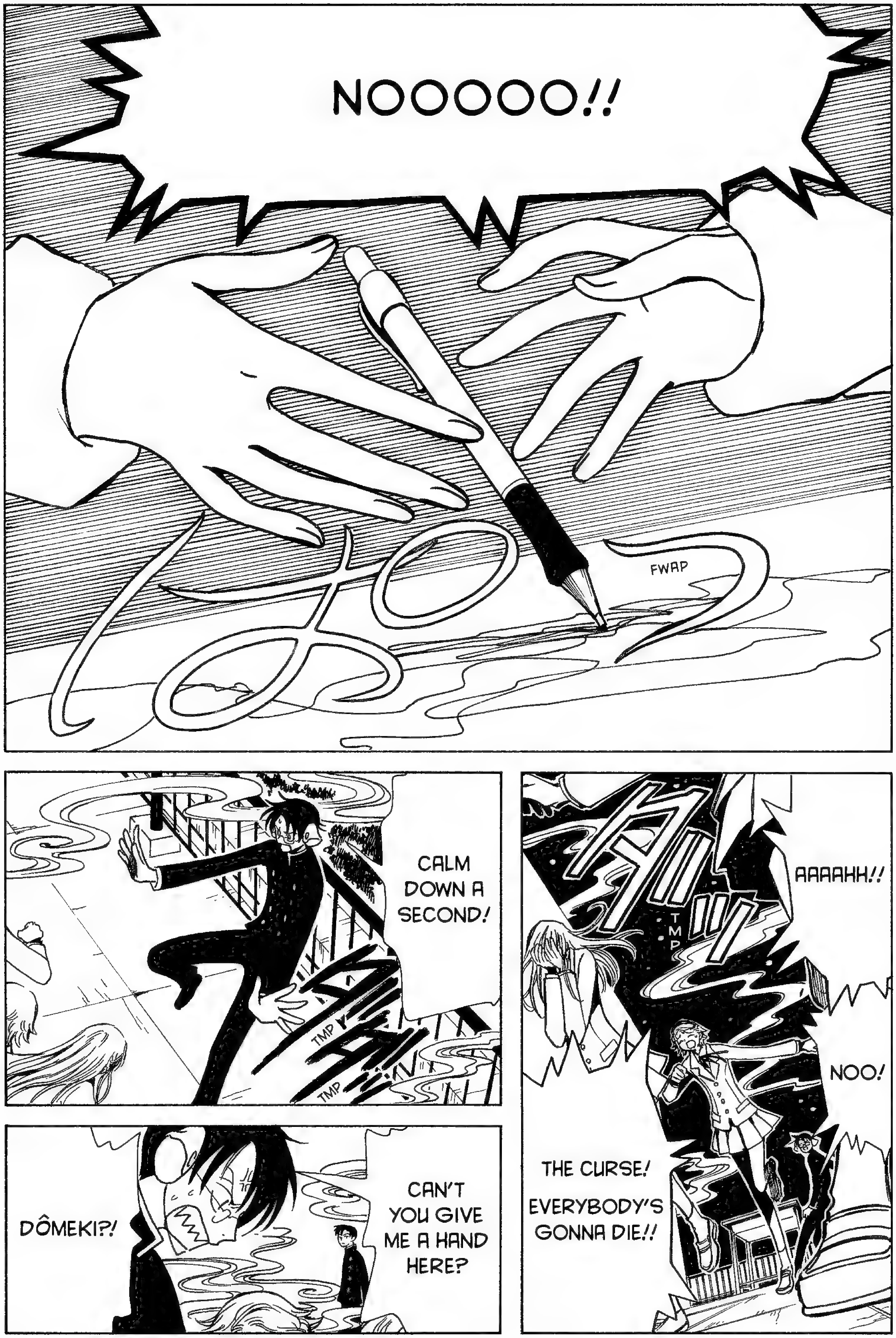

IT'S CLOSE TO SUNDOWN, AND UP HERE...
...THEY'RE JUST WORKING THEMSELVES INTO A PANIC!
WATANUKI, WHAT CURSE IS THAT?
THE GIRLS SAY THAT ANGEL-SAN IS DOING THIS...
...AND HE—
WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO? IS IT ANGEL-SAN?!
AH! NO! NO, IT ISN'T!!

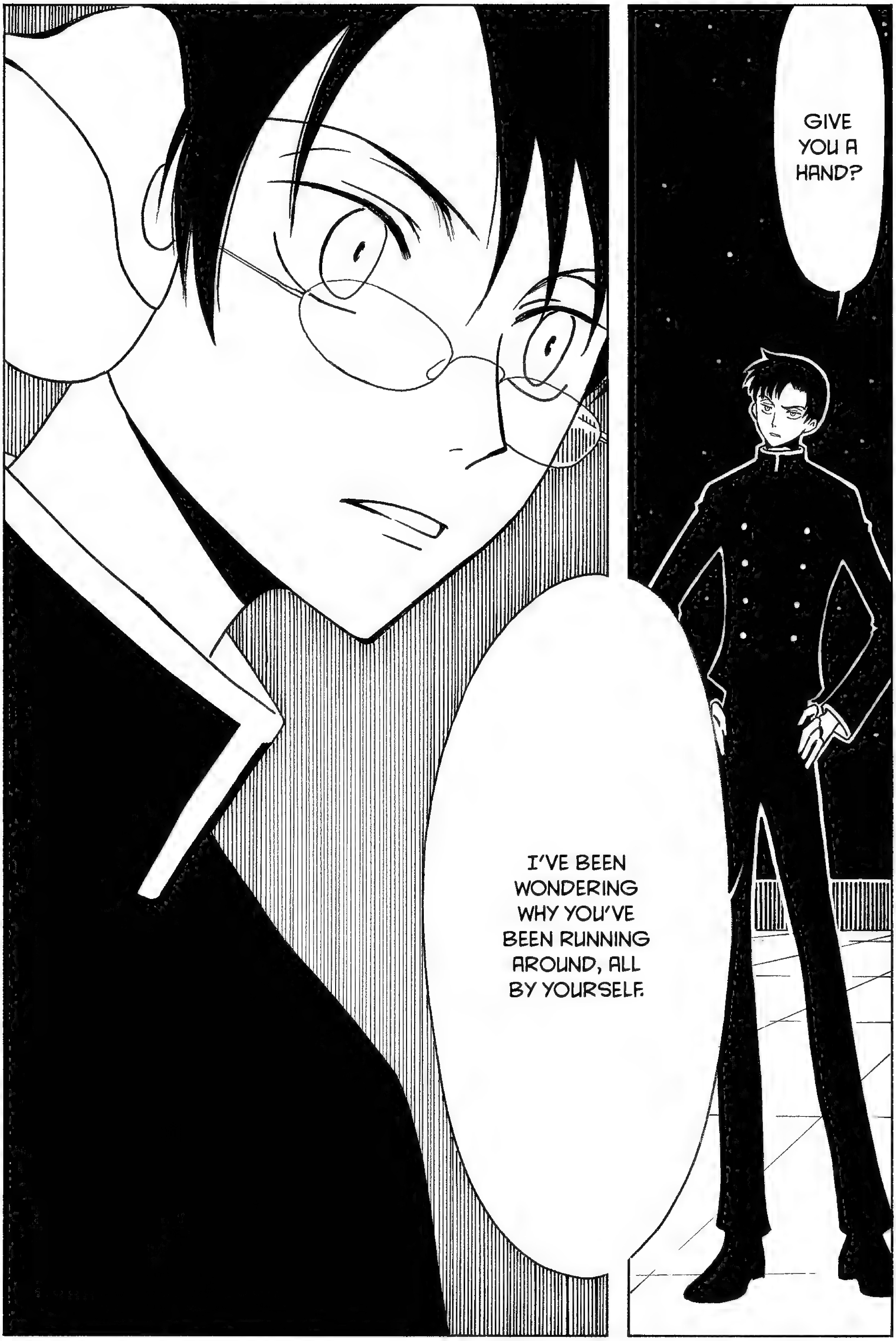

IT SAID IT WON'T LET ANYBODY GO UNTIL EVERYONE'S DEAD!
IS IT TELLING THE TRUTH?!
CAN YOU HEAR IT THROUGH THAT?!
WHOOSH
NO!
HEY!
THIS ISN'T...
COME ON!
LET ME TRY!
GIVE IT TO ME!

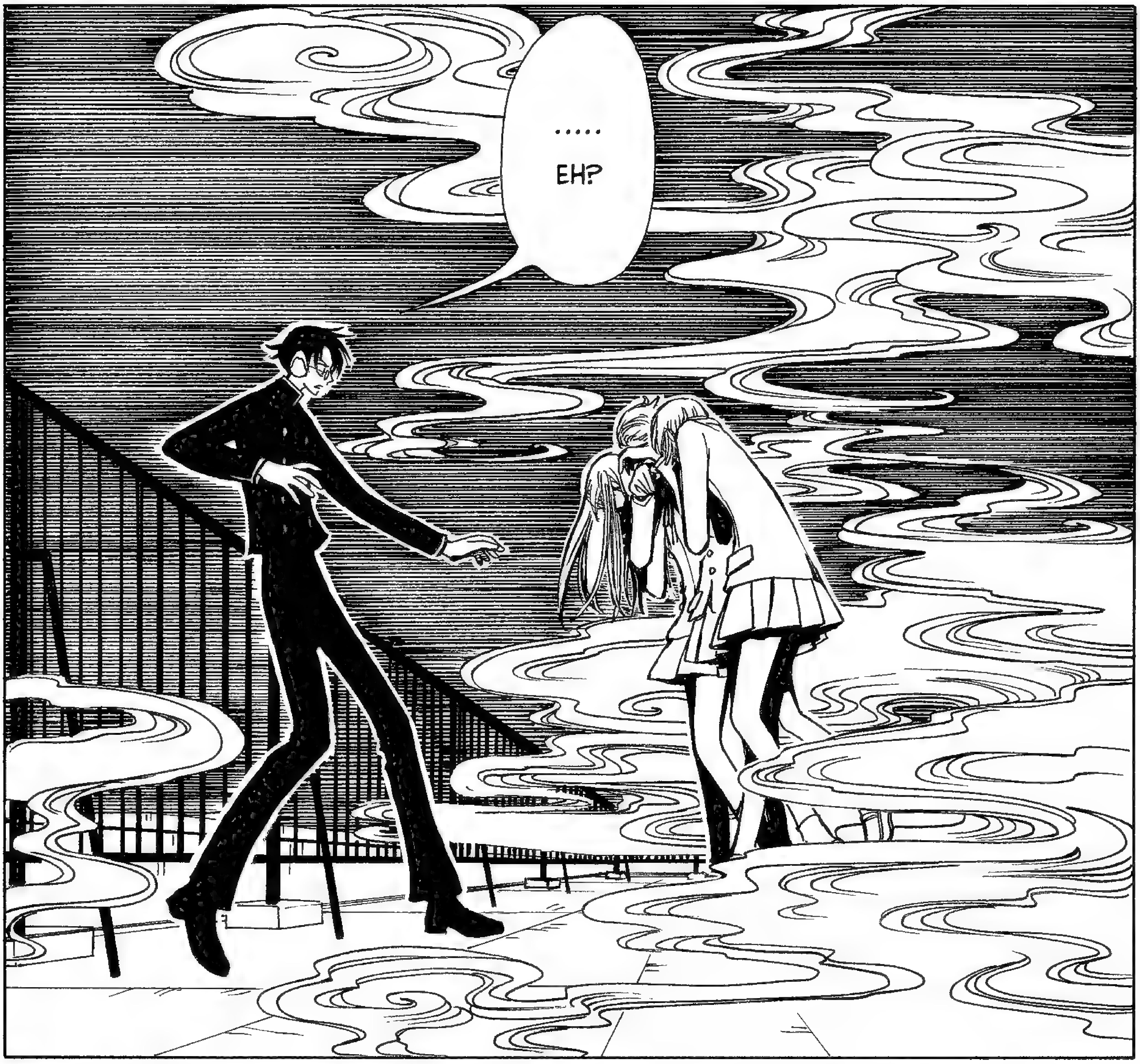

AAA AAA!
NO!
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
EYAAAAAH!!
MY HAND!
IT HURTS!!
GWOOM
GWOOM
IT'S LIKE IT'S BEING TORN TO PIECES!

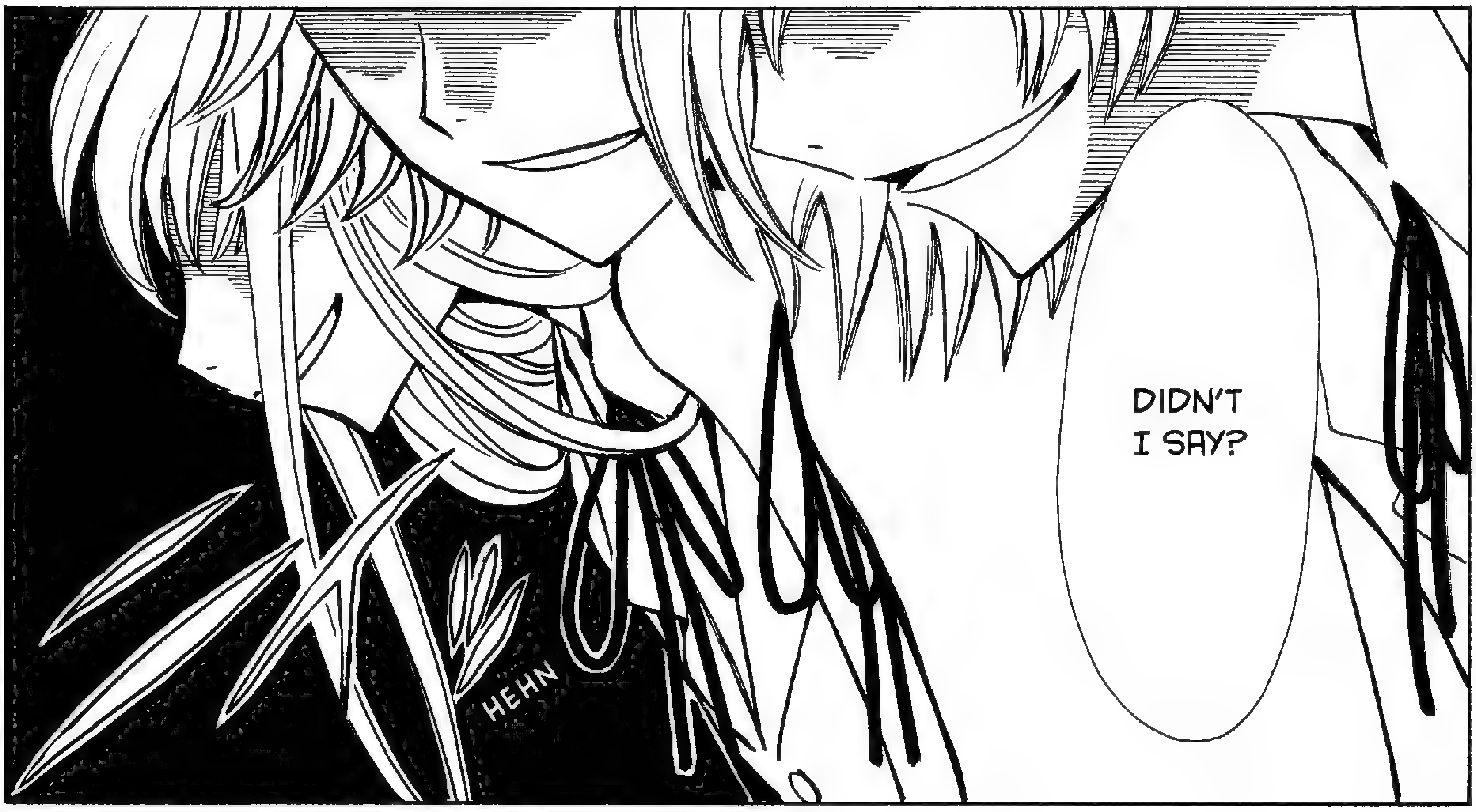

ガリガリガリガリ
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
SKRCH
LET GO OF IT!!
BUT IF THEY DO...
んぎぎぎぎ
NNGGGGGG
I CAN'T GET THEM APART!!
ガっ
GRMP

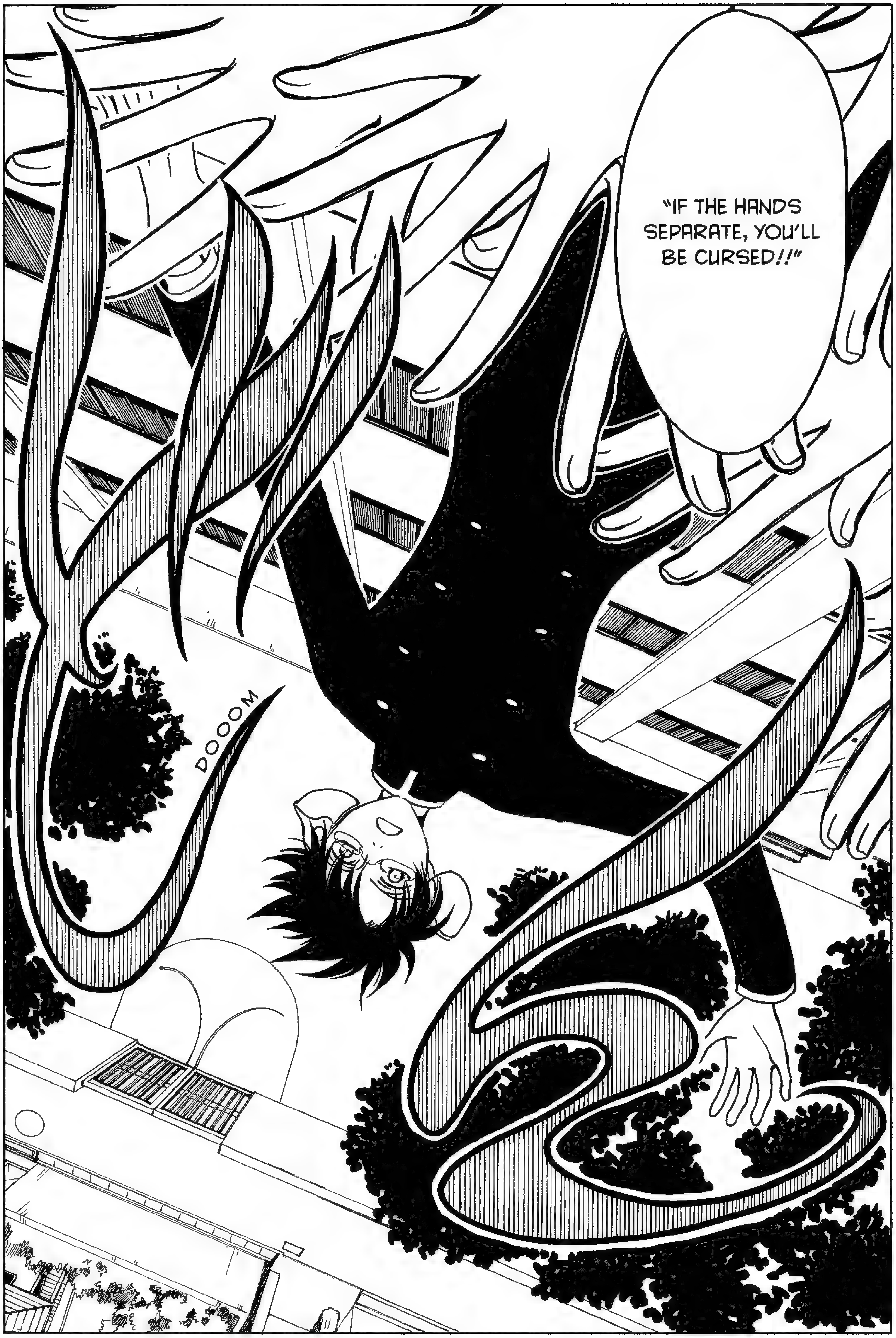

WATA-NUKI!
WATANUKI?
I THINK...
NNGGGGG
GRN GRN
...I'VE ALMOST GOT THEIR HANDS...
...TO LET GO OF THE PENCIL!
WAIT A SECOND!
GAAAAAAA!
WE'LL DIE!!
IF WE LET GO, THE CURSE...
I'LL EXPLAIN IT ALL AFTER!!

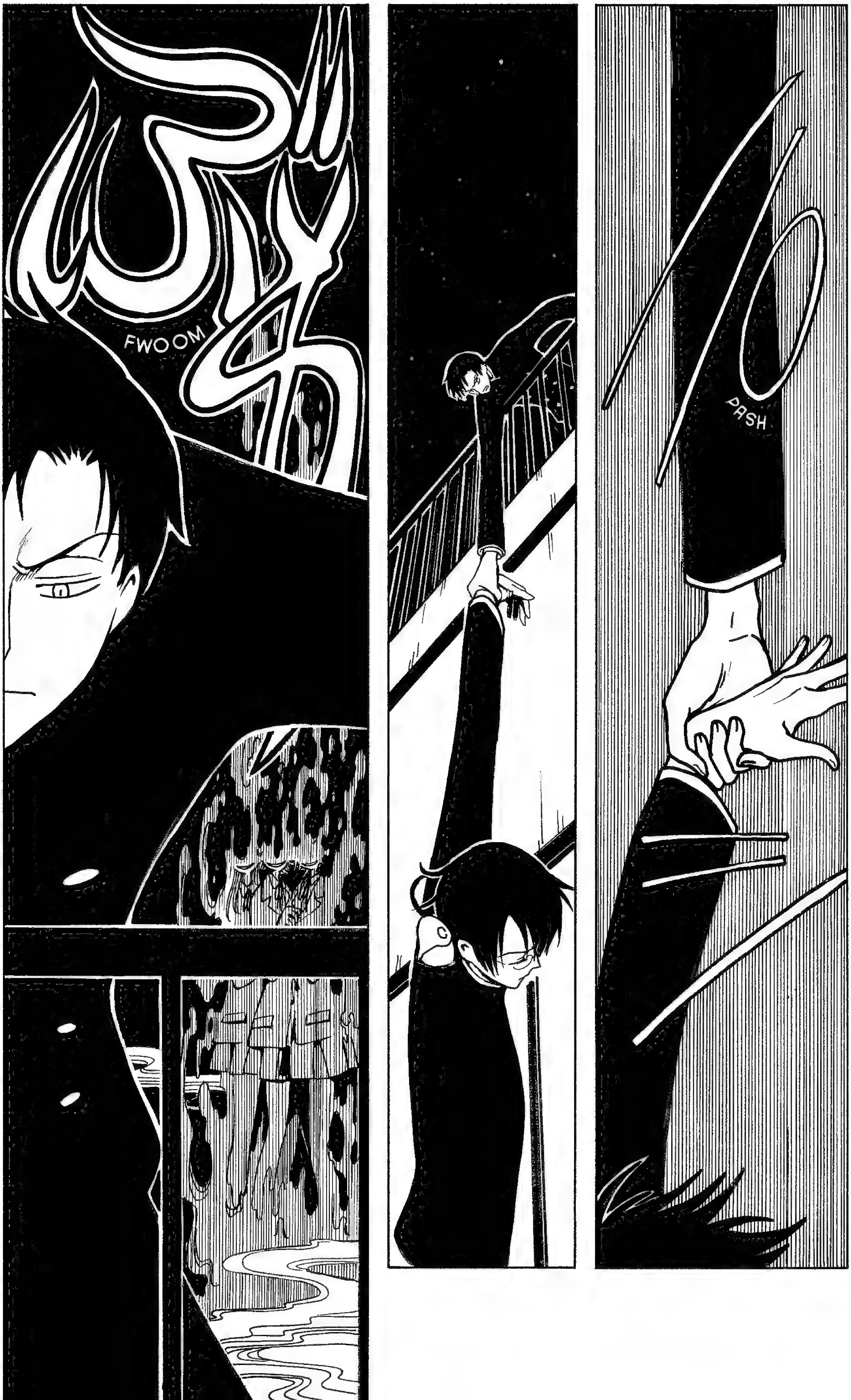

NOOOOO!!
FWAP
AAAAHH!!
TMP
NOO!
THE CURSE!
EVERYBODY'S GONNA DIE!!
CALM DOWN A SECOND!
TMP
TMP
CAN'T YOU GIVE ME A HAND HERE?
DÔMEKI?!

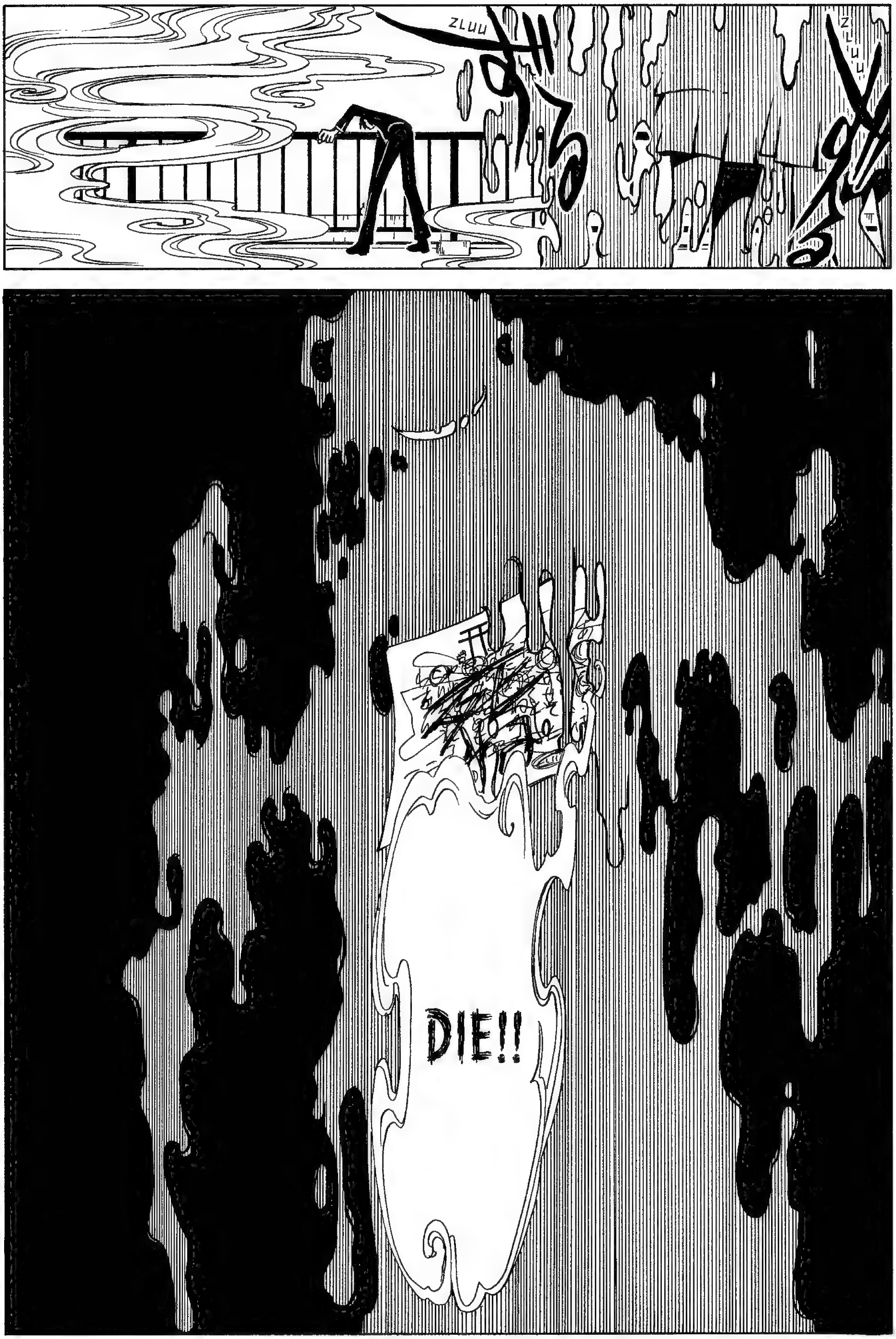

GIVE YOU A HAND?
I'VE BEEN WONDERING WHY YOU'VE BEEN RUNNING AROUND, ALL BY YOURSELF.

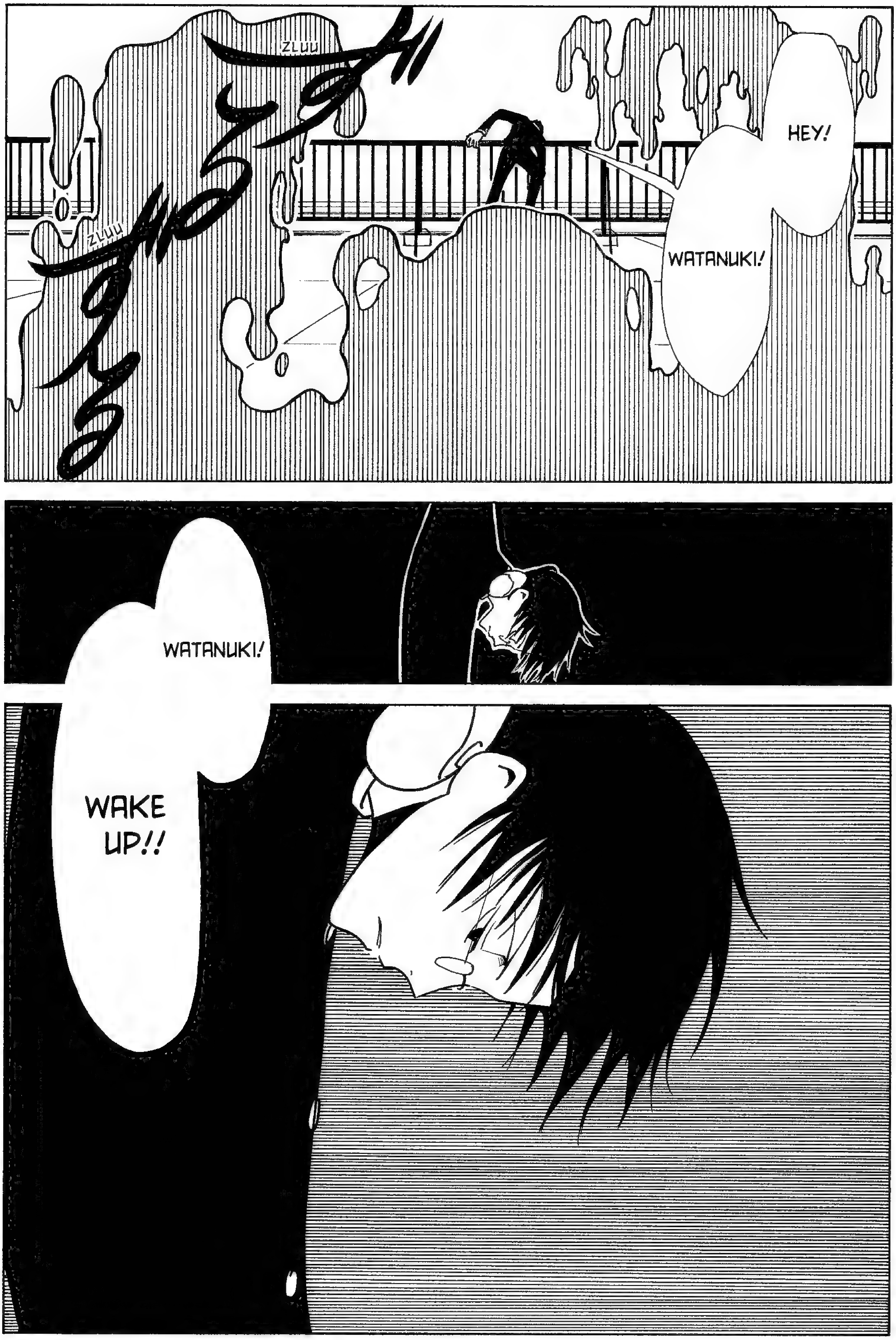

.....
EH?

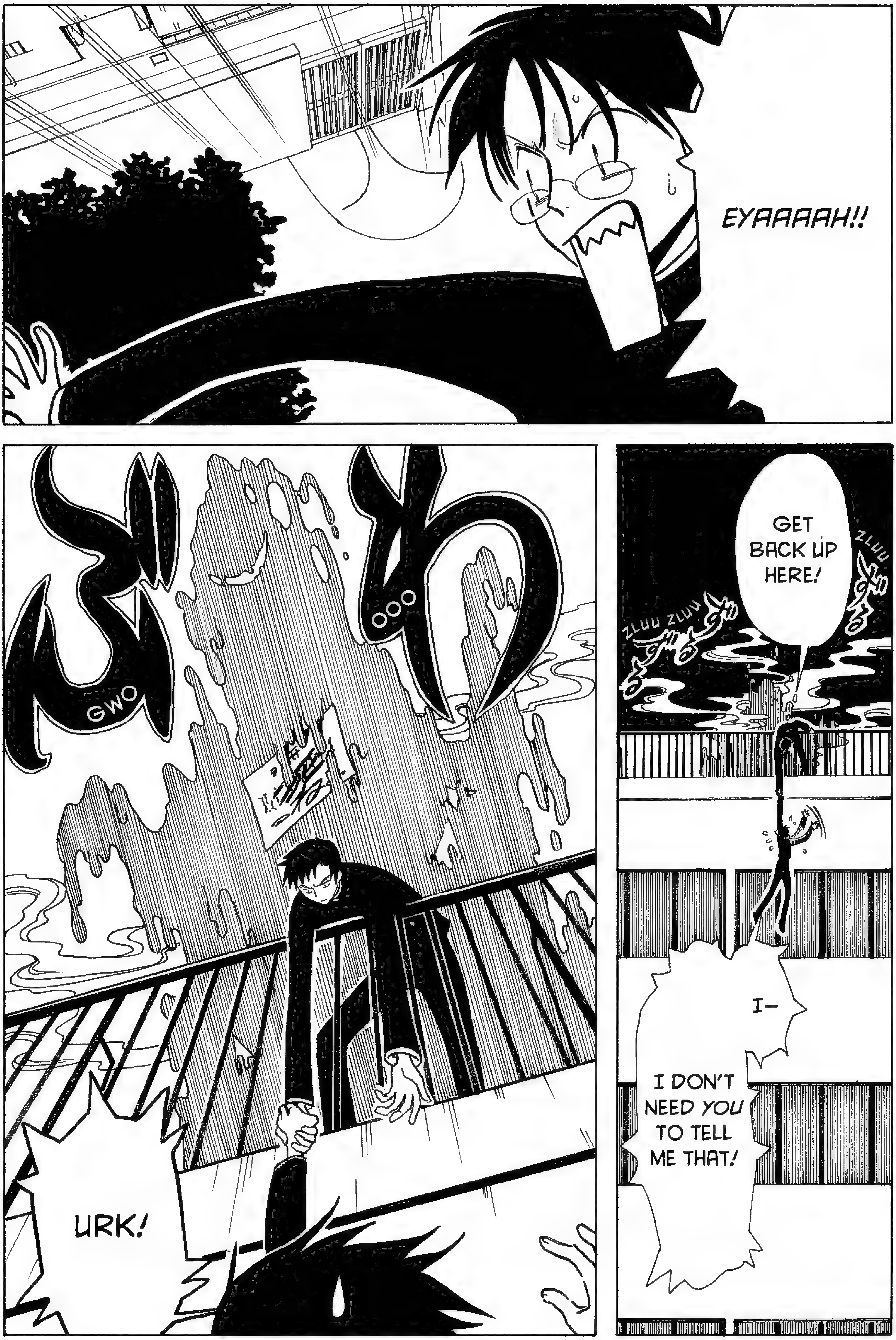

DIDN'T I SAY?
HEHN

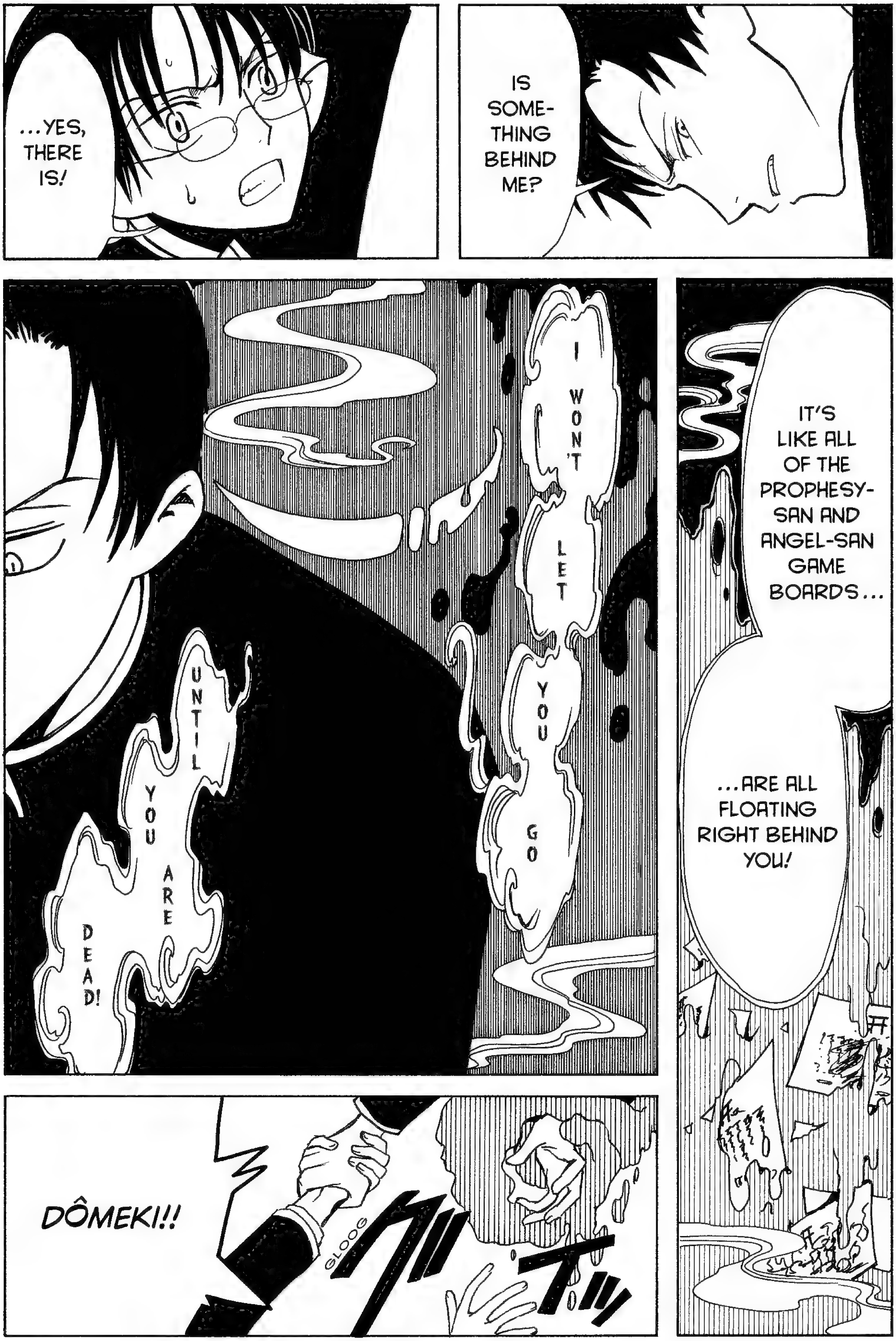

"IF THE HANDS SEPARATE, YOU'LL BE CURSED!!"
DOOOM

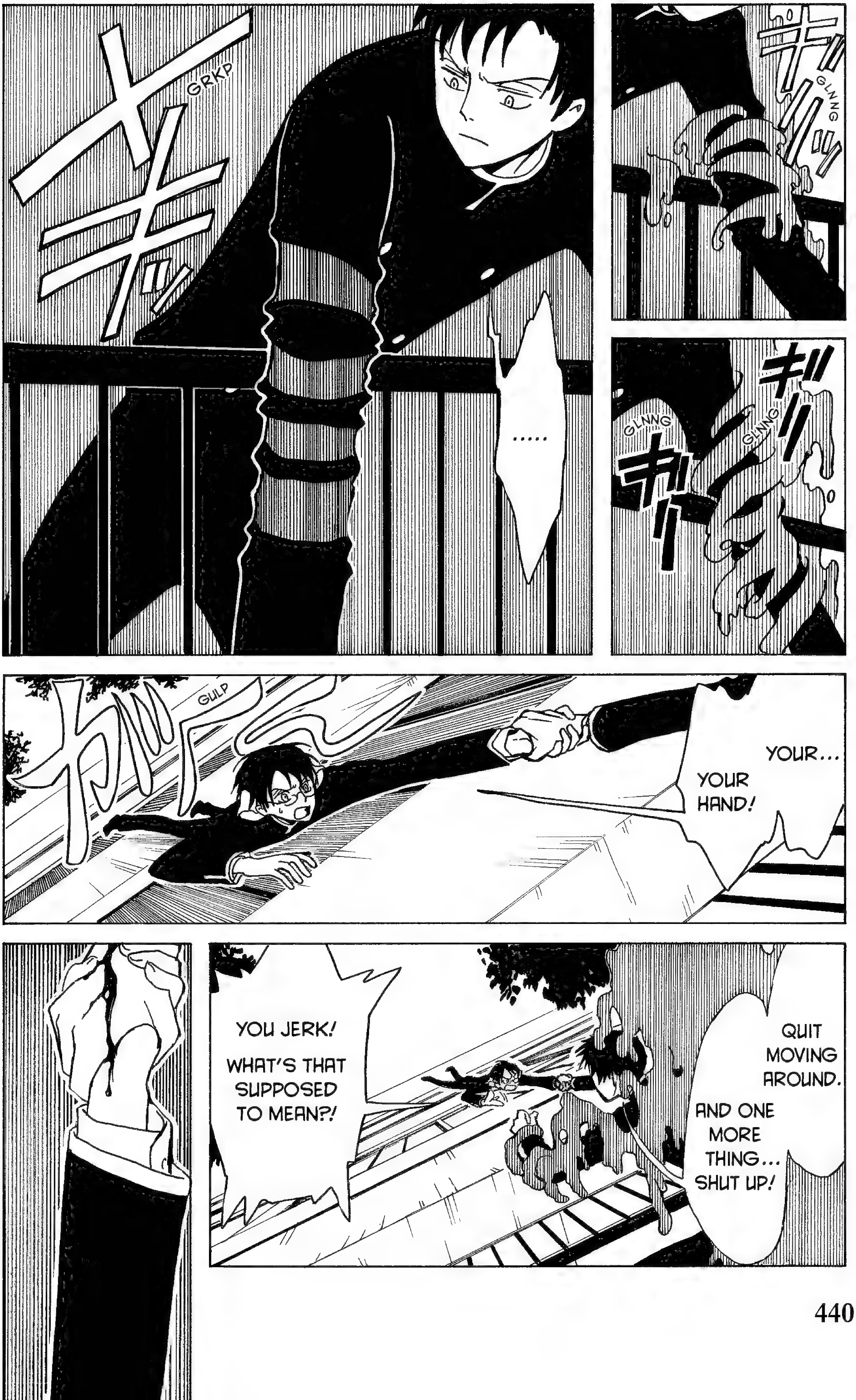

PASH
FWOOM

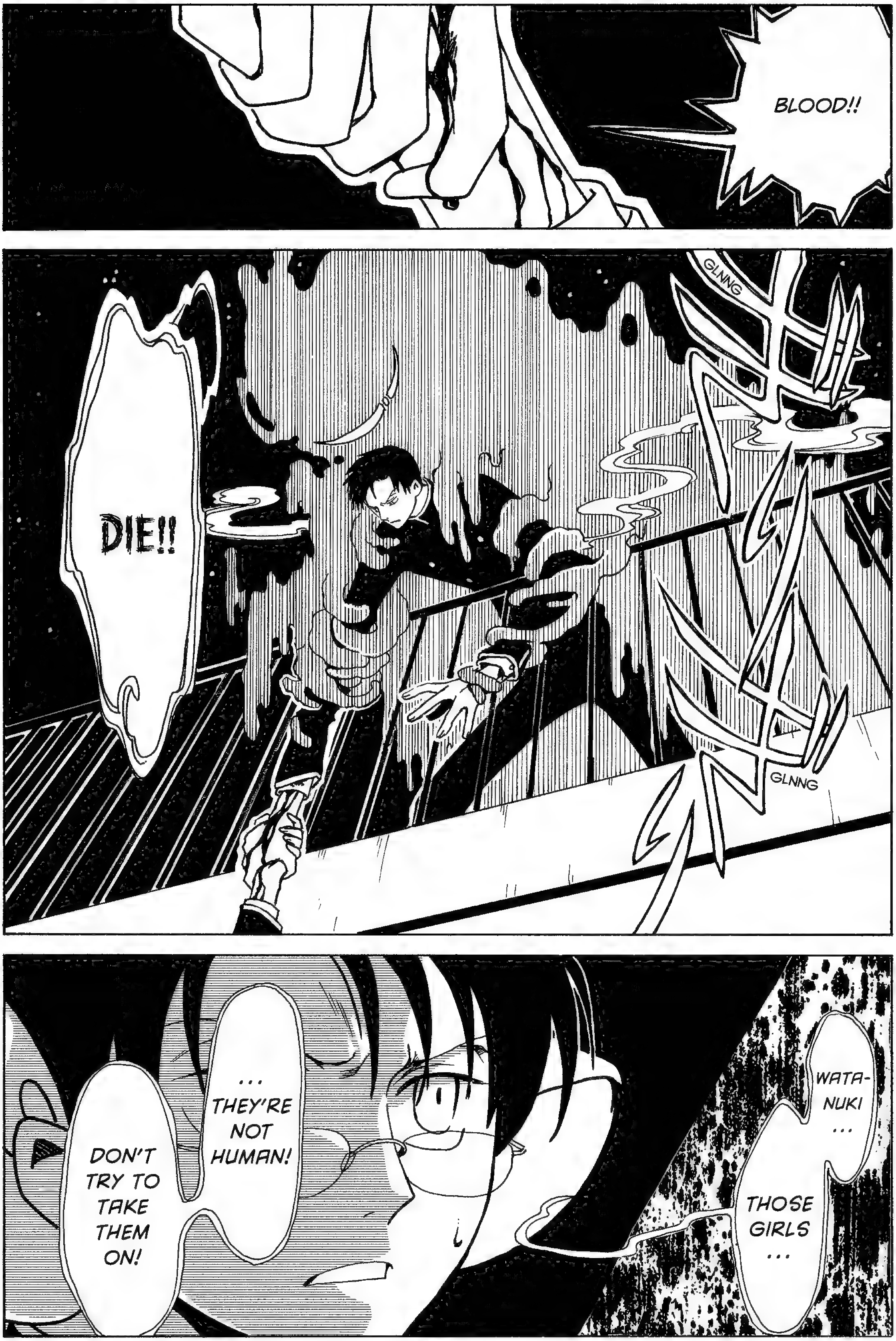

ZLUU
ZLUU
DIE!!

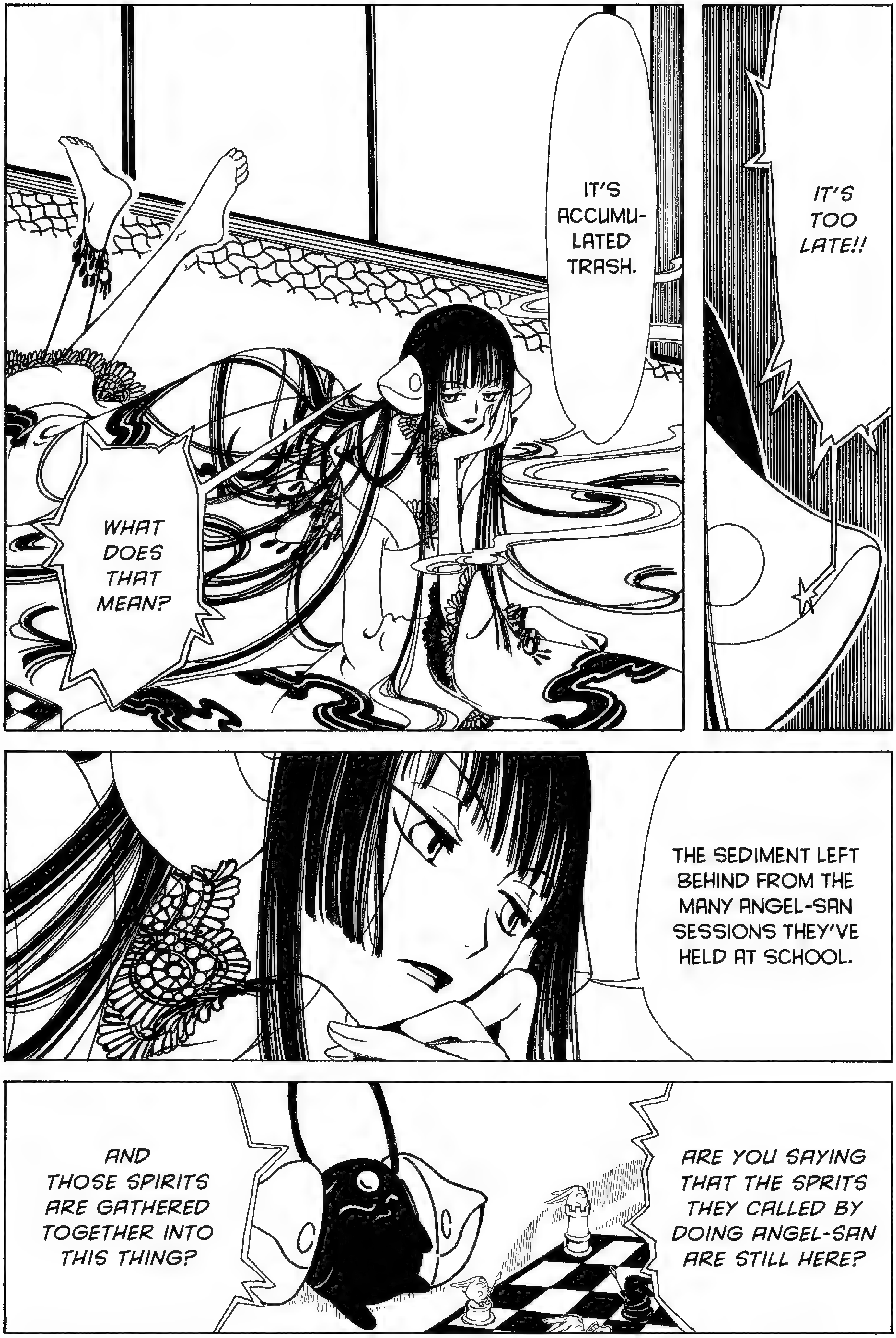

HEY!
WATANUKI!
ZLUU
ZLUU
WATANUKI!
WAKE UP!!

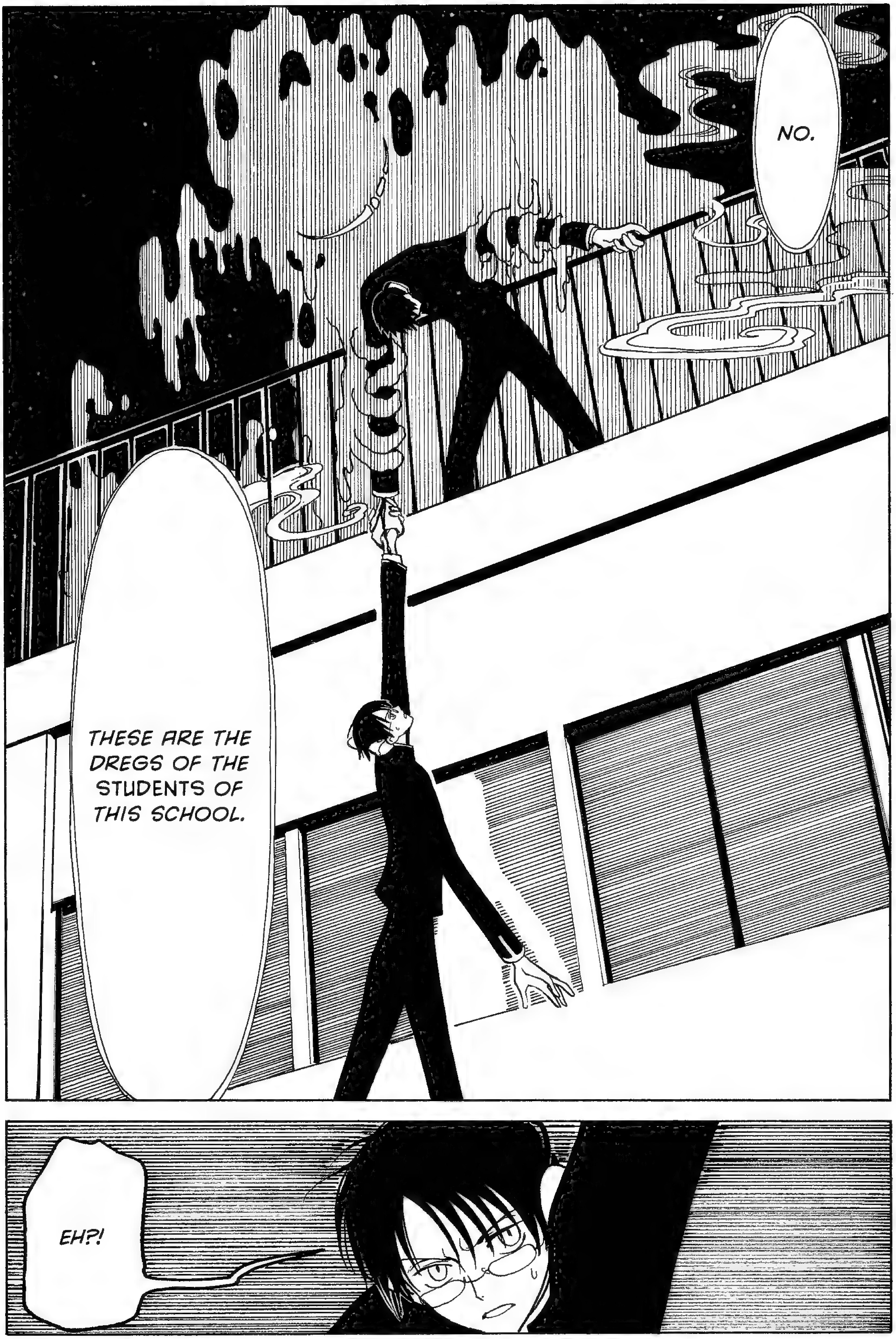

EYAAAAH!!
GET BACK UP HERE!
ZLUU ZLUU
ZLUU
I—
I DON'T NEED *YOU* TO TELL ME THAT!
GWO
URK!


IS SOMETHING BEHIND ME?
...YES, THERE IS!
IT'S LIKE ALL OF THE PROPHESY-SAN AND ANGEL-SAN GAME BOARDS...
...ARE ALL FLOATING RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
I WON'T LET YOU GO
UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD!
GLOOG
DÔMEKI!!

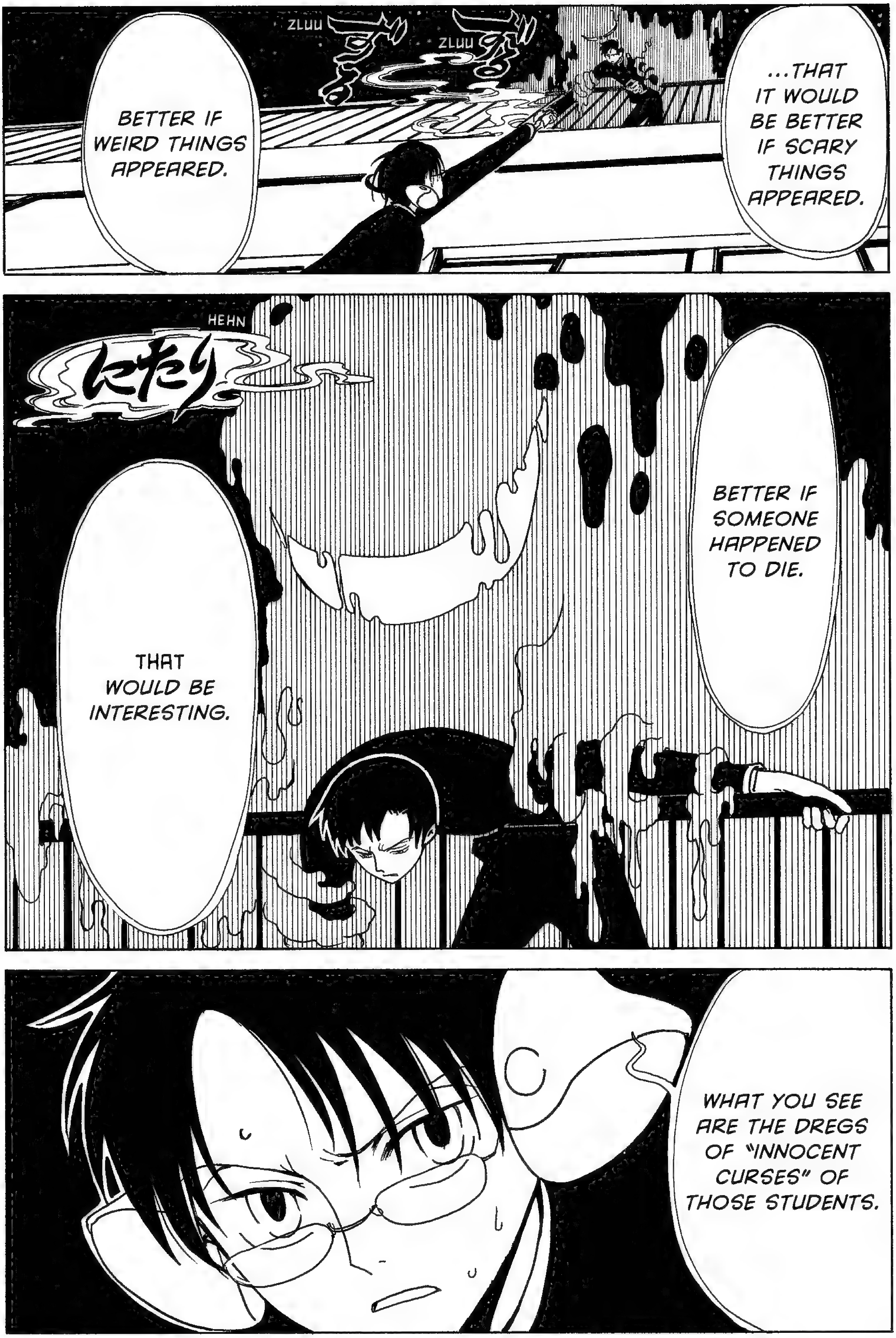

GLNG
GLNG
GLNG
GRKP
......
GULP
YOUR...
YOUR HAND!
QUIT MOVING AROUND.
AND ONE MORE THING... SHUT UP!
YOU JERK!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

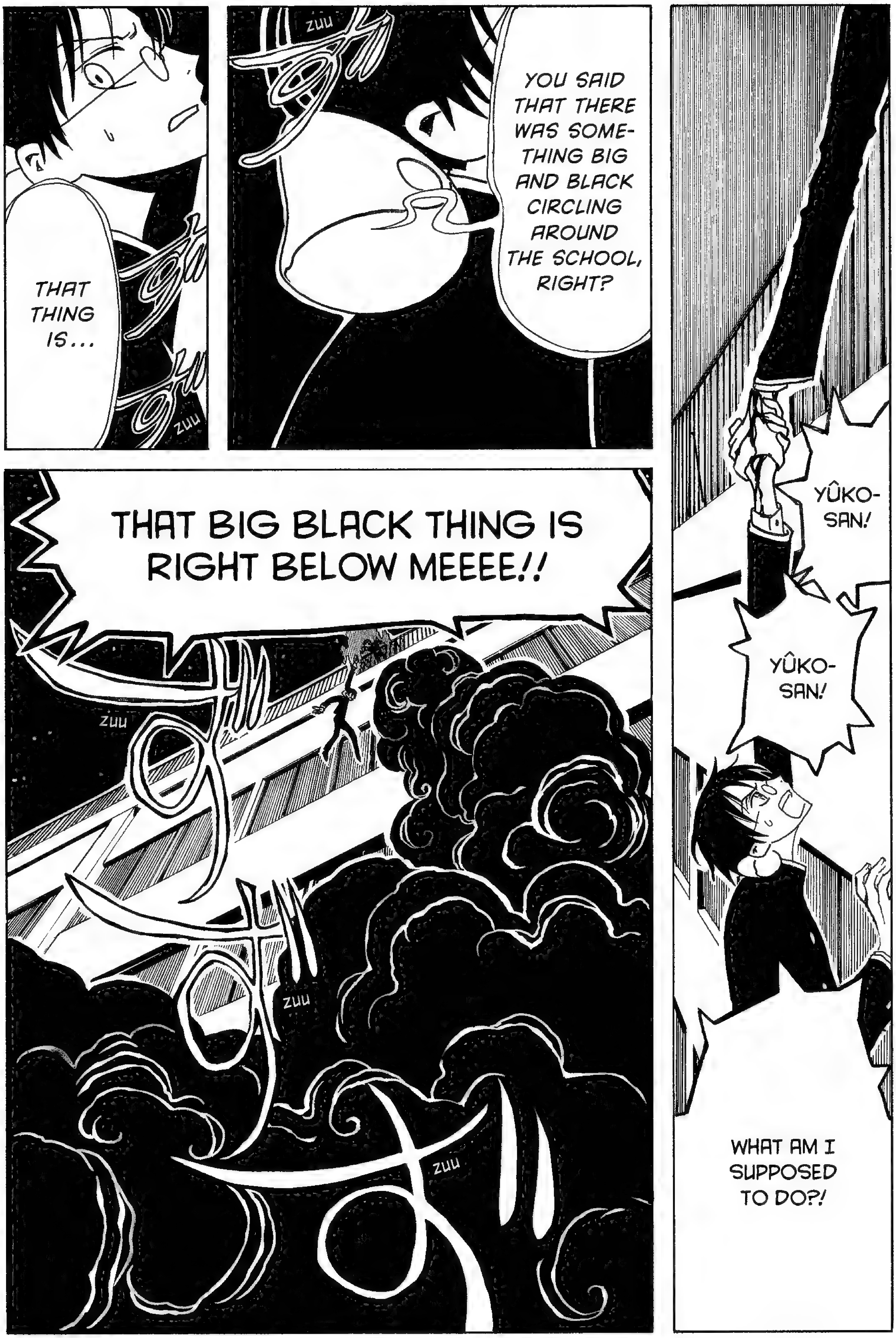

BLOOD!!
GLNNG
DIE!!
GLNNG
WATA-NUKI…
THOSE GIRLS…
…THEY'RE NOT HUMAN!
DON'T TRY TO TAKE THEM ON!

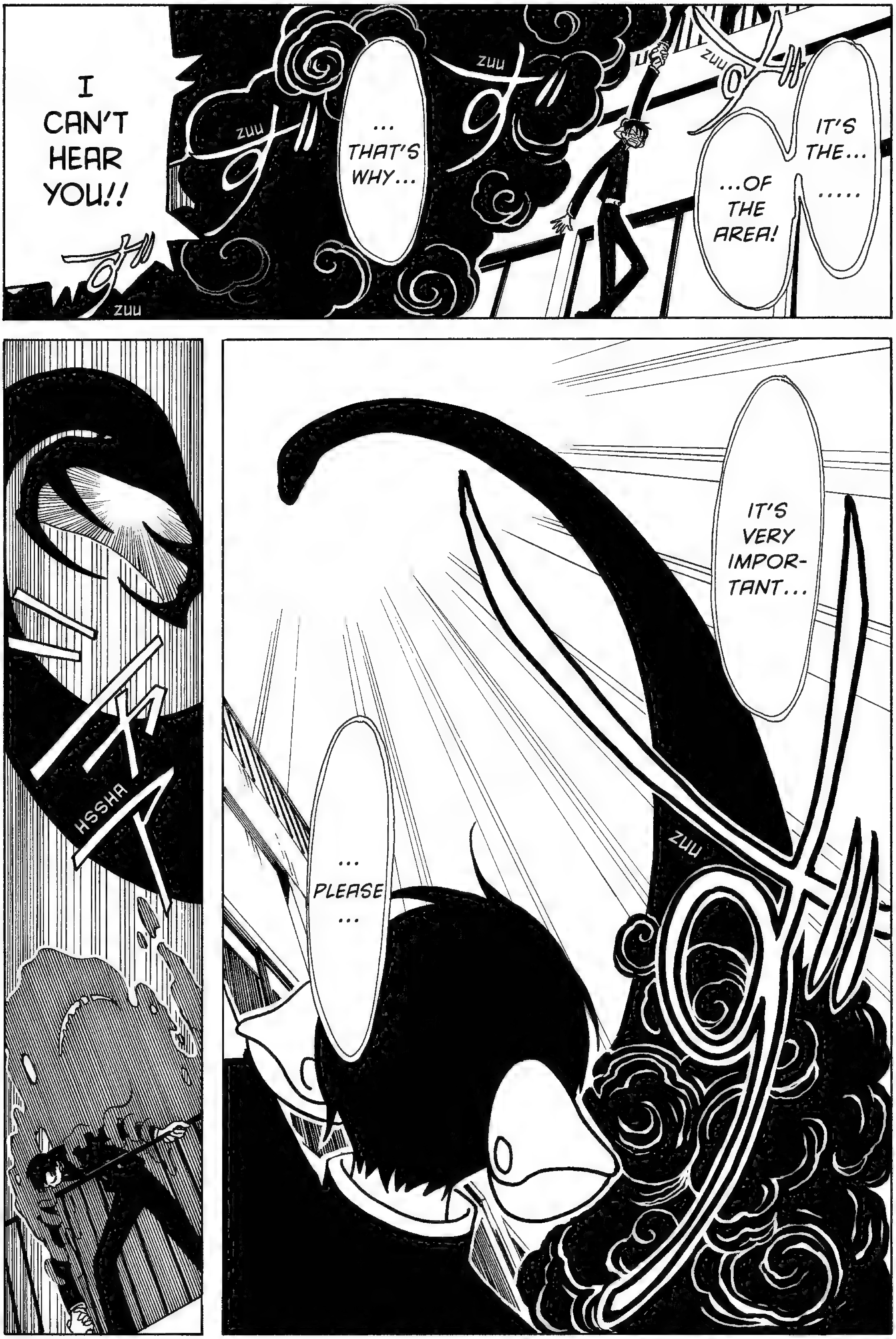

IT'S TOO LATE!!
IT'S ACCUMULATED TRASH.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
THE SEDIMENT LEFT BEHIND FROM THE MANY ANGEL-SAN SESSIONS THEY'VE HELD AT SCHOOL.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE SPRITS THEY CALLED BY DOING ANGEL-SAN ARE STILL HERE?
AND THOSE SPIRITS ARE GATHERED TOGETHER INTO THIS THING?

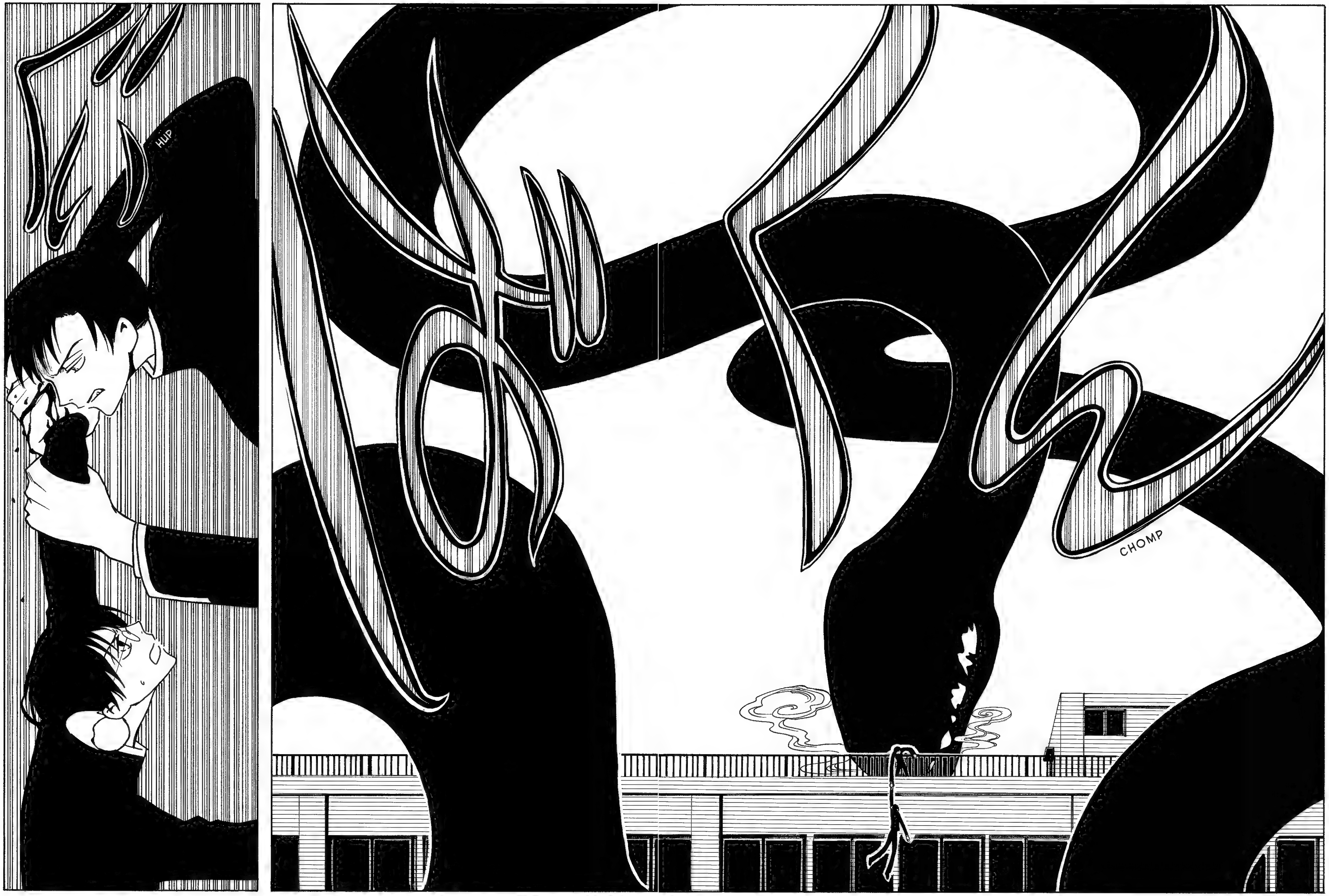

NO.
THESE ARE THE DREGS OF THE STUDENTS OF THIS SCHOOL.
EH?!

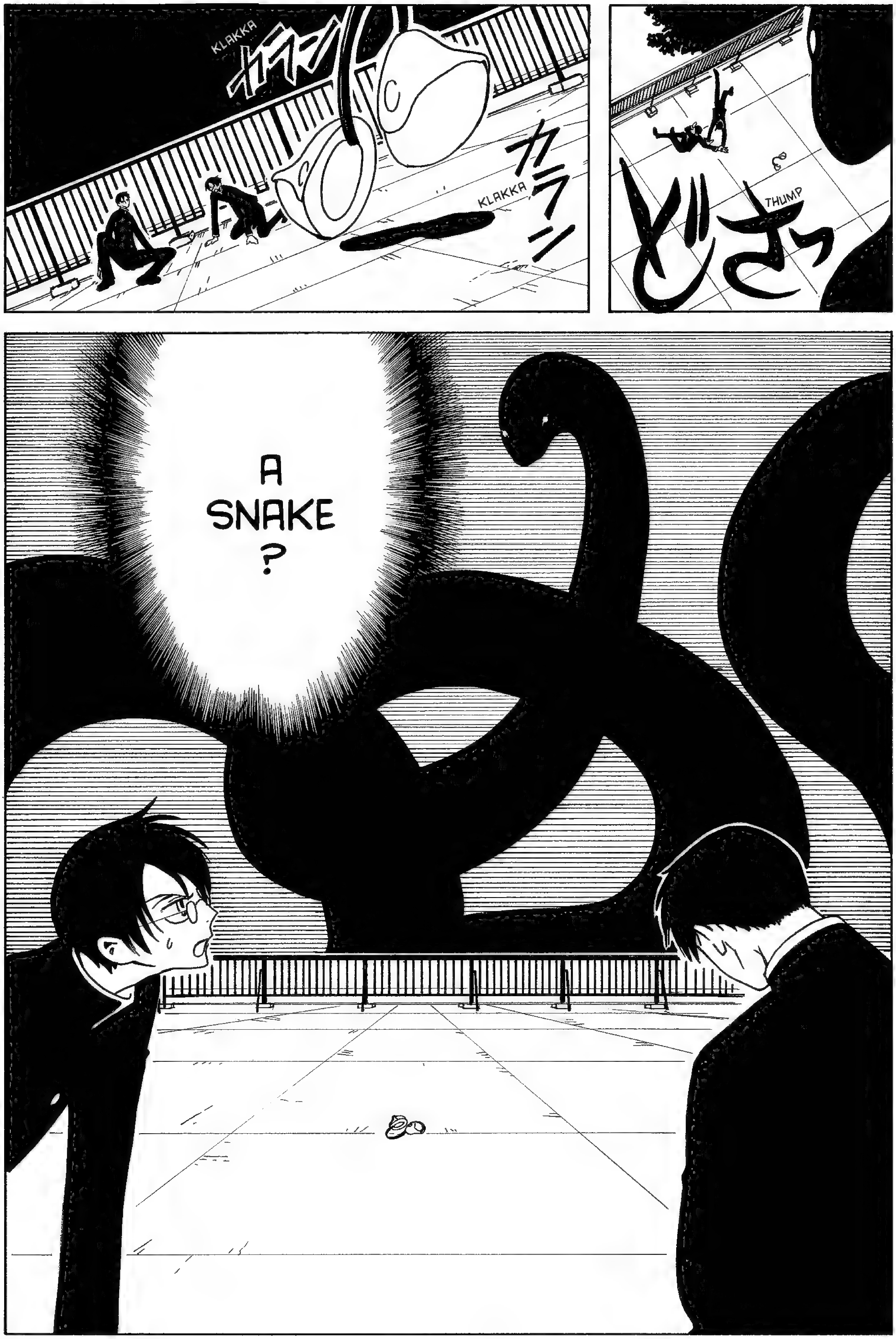
ANGEL-SAN OR PROPHESY-SAN ARE TYPES OF SPIRIT SUMMONING.
NORMALLY OCCULT PRACTICES DONE BY AMATEURS AREN'T SUCCESSFUL.
SO...
THEY TRY AND TRY, AND THE ONLY THING THEY GET IS EMPTY EFFORT
THE THING IS...
...THAT'S BORING.
THAT LEADS...
こつ
TOK
...TO QUITE A NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO START THINKING...

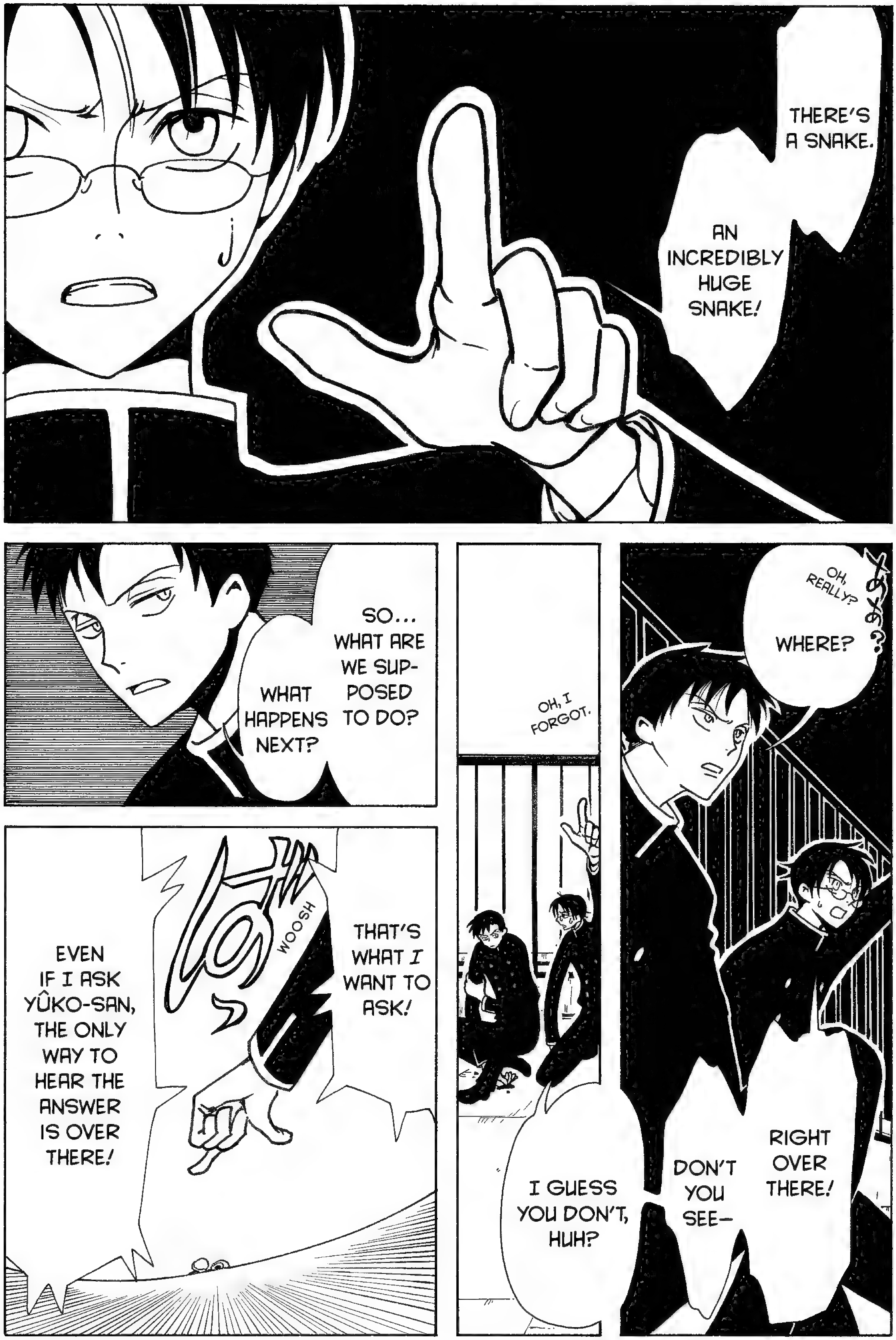

...THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF SCARY THINGS APPEARED.
ZLUU
ZLUU
BETTER IF WEIRD THINGS APPEARED.
BETTER IF SOMEONE HAPPENED TO DIE.
HEHN
にたり
THAT WOULD BE INTERESTING.
WHAT YOU SEE ARE THE DREGS OF "INNOCENT CURSES" OF THOSE STUDENTS.

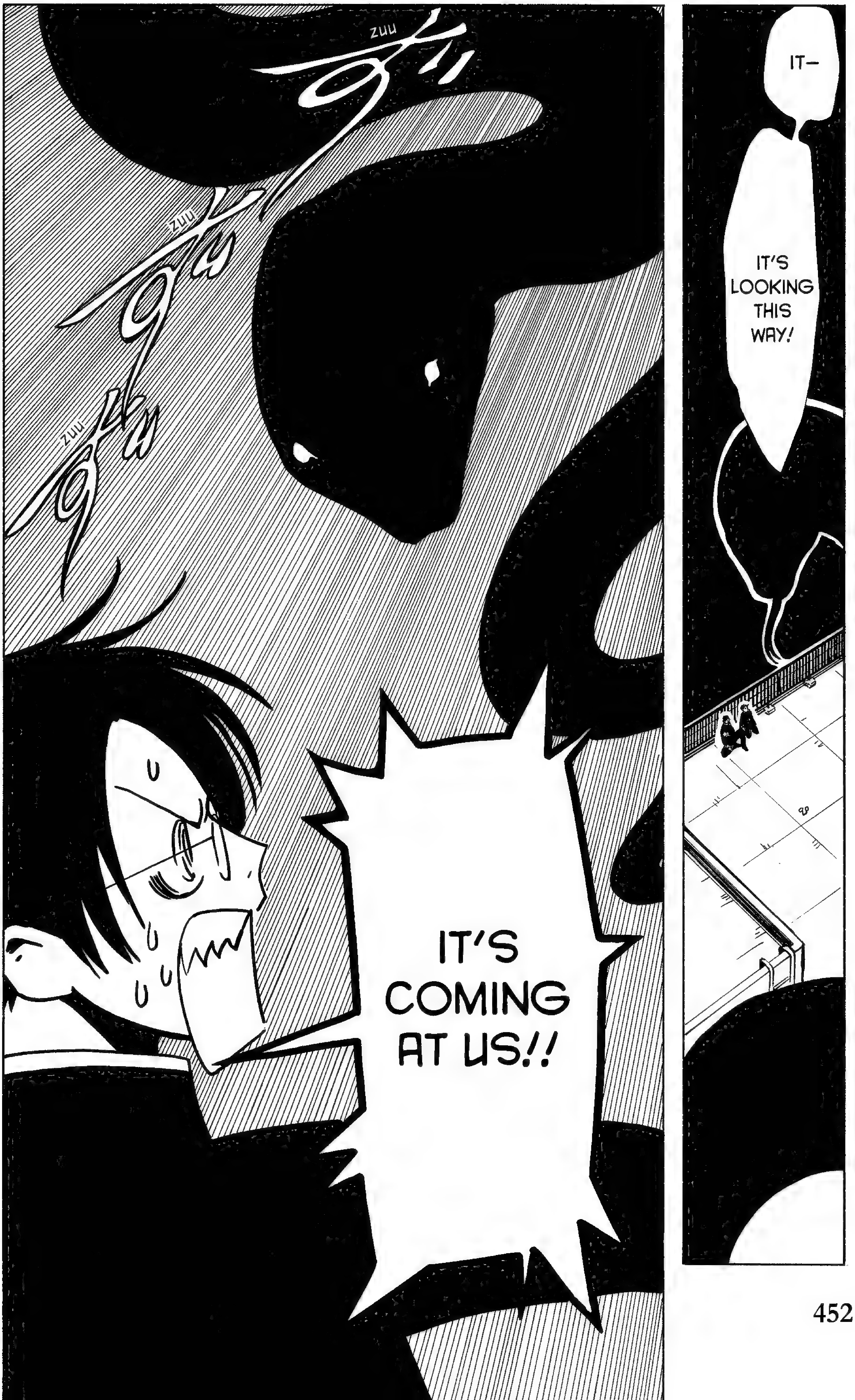

zuu
YOU SAID THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING BIG AND BLACK CIRCLING AROUND THE SCHOOL, RIGHT?
THAT THING IS...
zuu
THAT BIG BLACK THING IS RIGHT BELOW MEEEE!!
zuu
zuu
zuu
YÛKO-SAN!
YÛKO-SAN!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?!

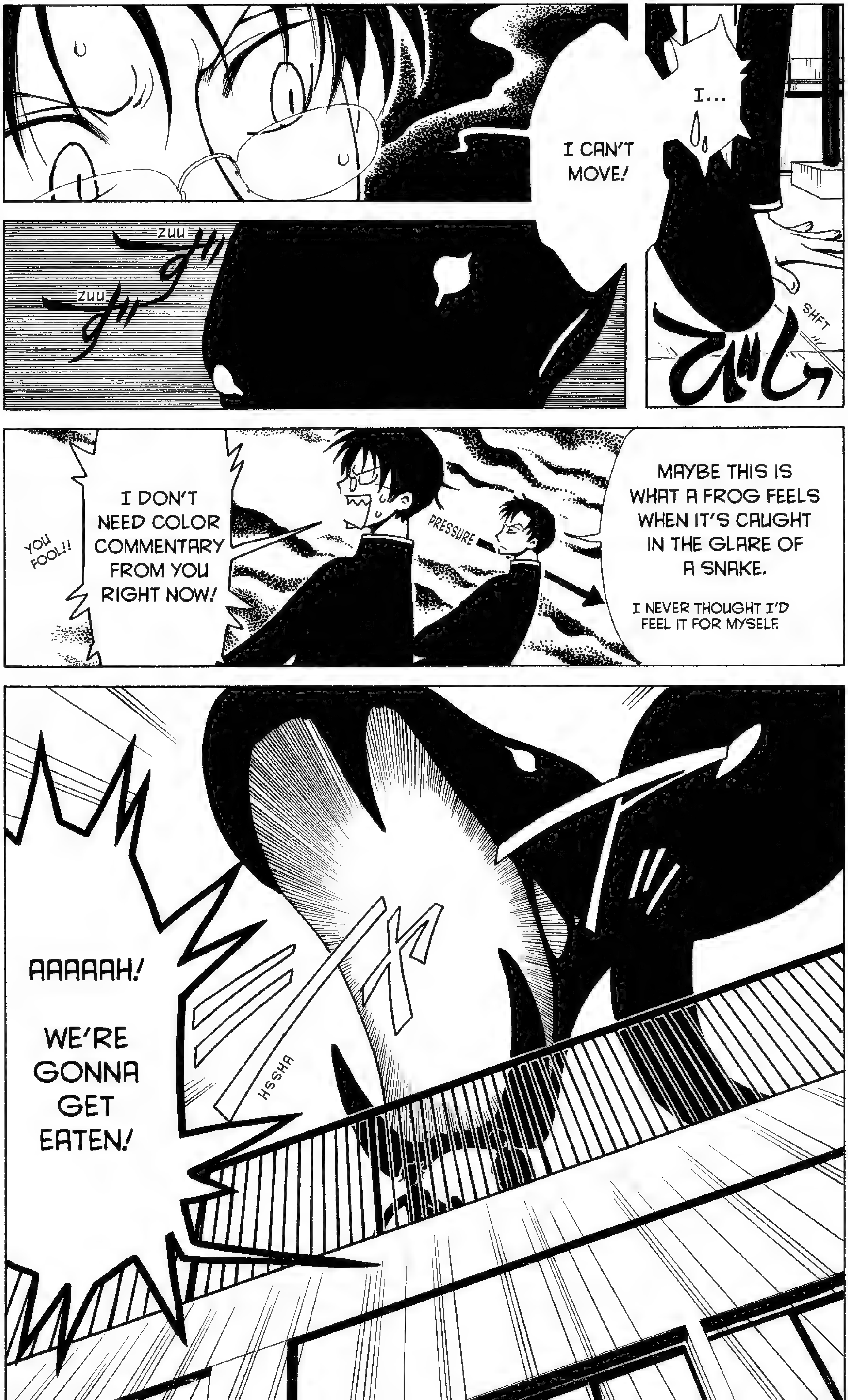

IT'S THE... .....
...OF THE AREA!
ZUU
ZUU
...THAT'S WHY...
ZUU
I CAN'T HEAR YOU!!
ZUU
IT'S VERY IMPORTANT...
ZUU
...PLEASE...
HSSHA

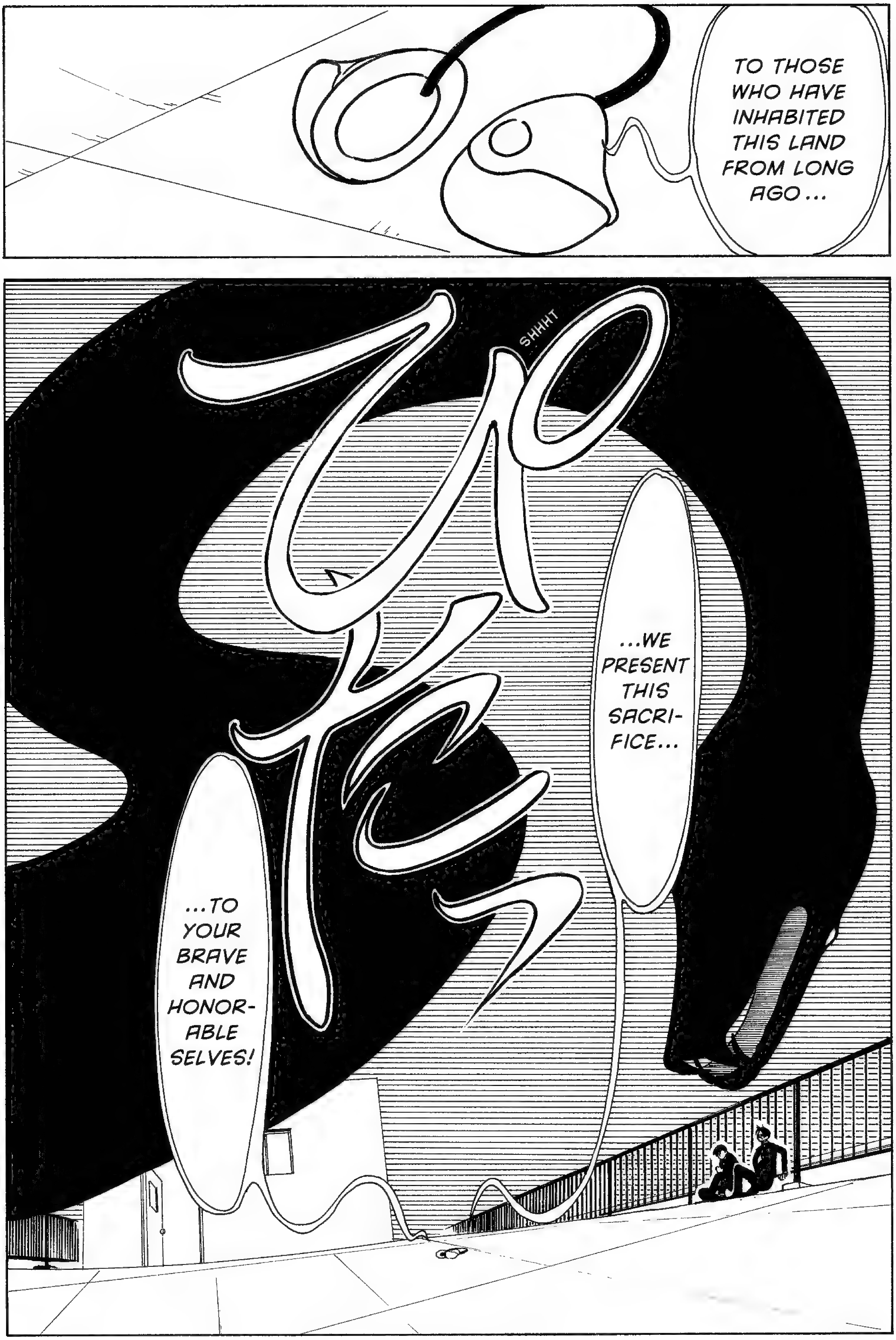

CHOMP
HUP

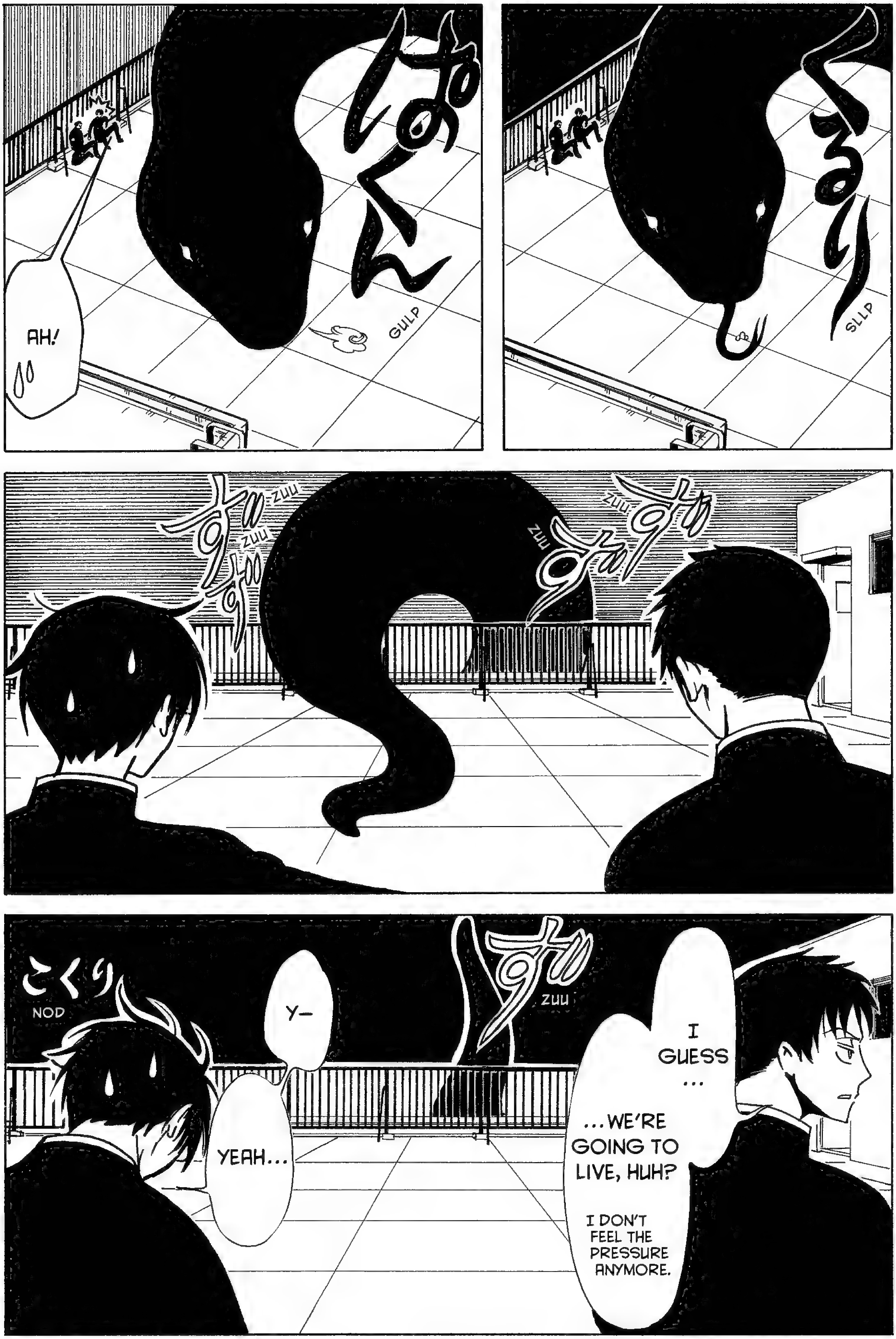

どさっ
THUMP
カラン
KLAKKA
カラン
KLAKKA
A SNAKE?

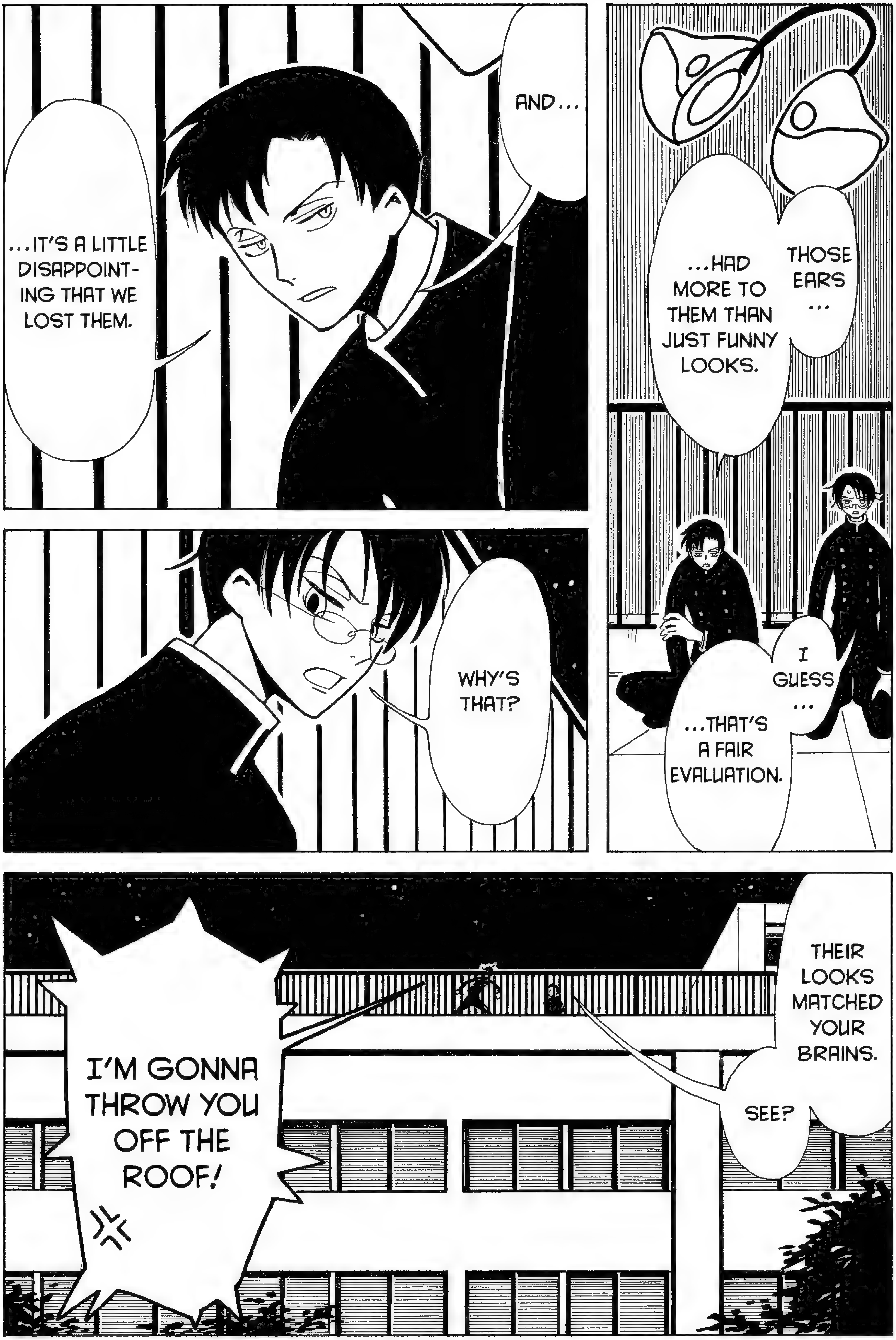

THERE'S A SNAKE.
AN INCREDIBLY HUGE SNAKE!
OH, REALLY?
ああ？
WHERE?
RIGHT OVER THERE!
DON'T YOU SEE—
I GUESS YOU DON'T, HUH?
OH, I FORGOT.
SO... WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO?
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
THAT'S WHAT *I* WANT TO ASK!
WOOSH
EVEN IF I ASK YÛKO-SAN, THE ONLY WAY TO HEAR THE ANSWER IS OVER THERE!

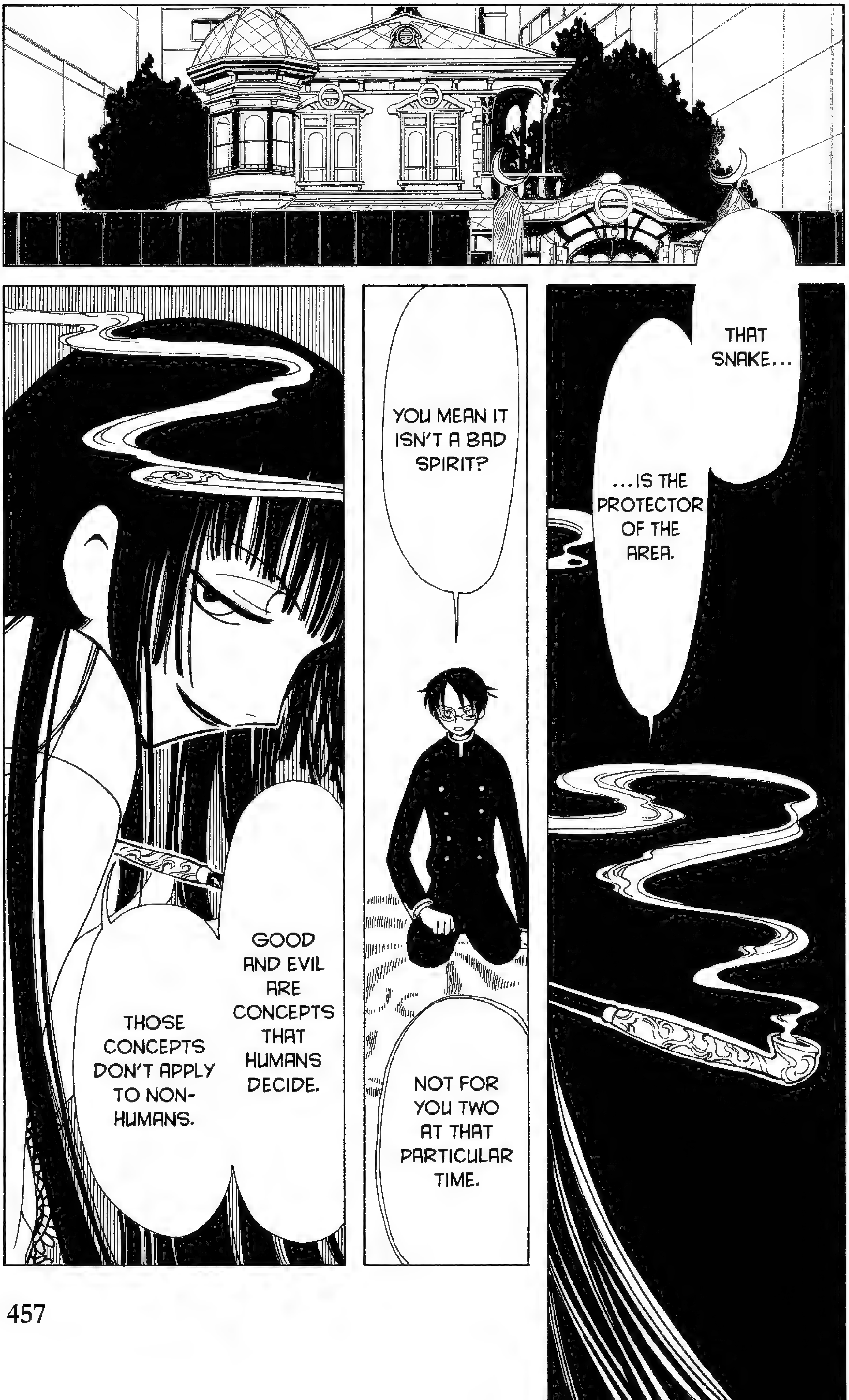

IT—
IT'S LOOKING THIS WAY!
zuu
zuu
zuu
IT'S COMING AT US!!

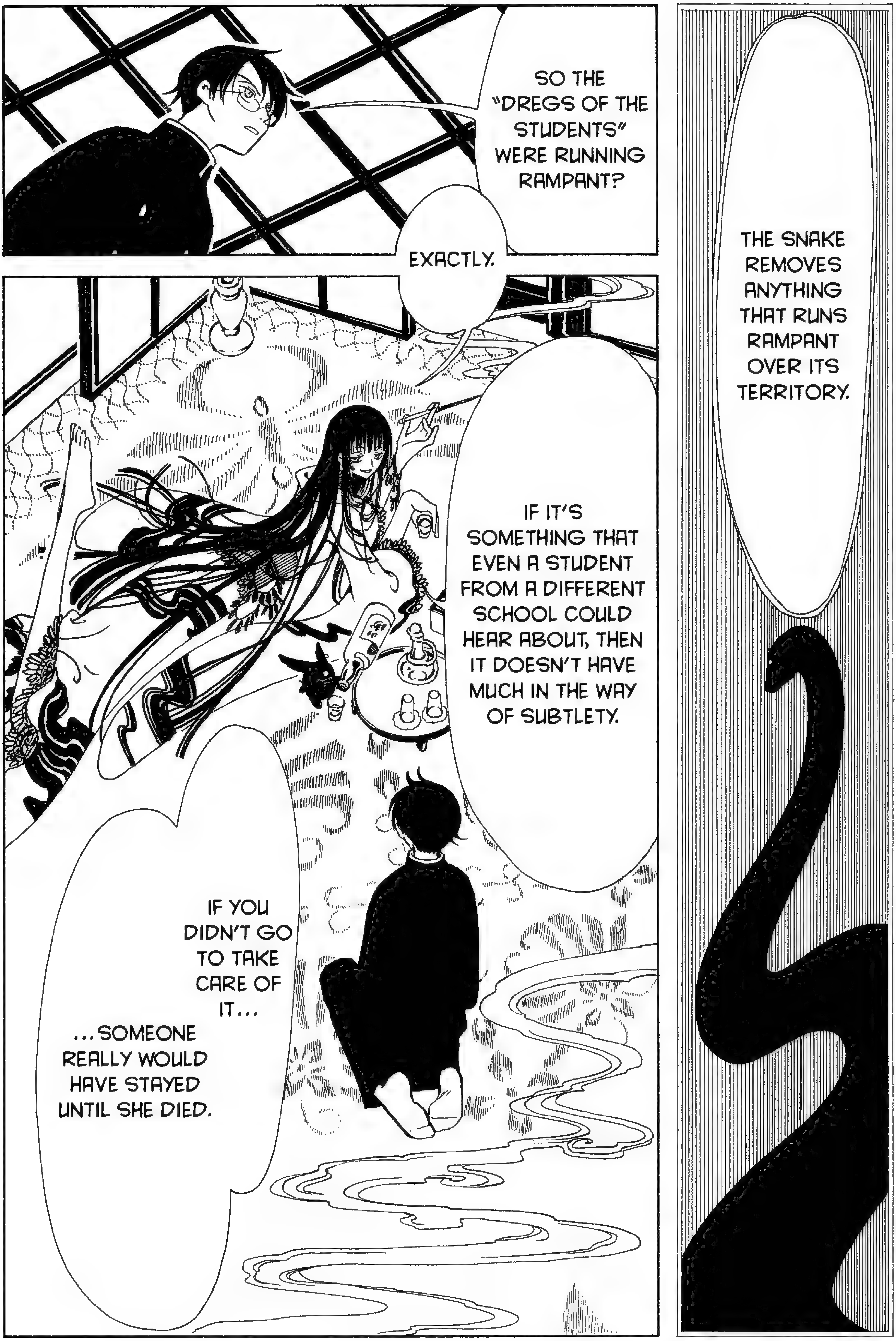

I...
I CAN'T MOVE!
SHFT
ZUU
ZUU
MAYBE THIS IS WHAT A FROG FEELS WHEN IT'S CAUGHT IN THE GLARE OF A SNAKE.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D FEEL IT FOR MYSELF.
PRESSURE
I DON'T NEED COLOR COMMENTARY FROM YOU RIGHT NOW!
YOU FOOL!!
HSSHA
AAAAAH!
WE'RE GONNA GET EATEN!

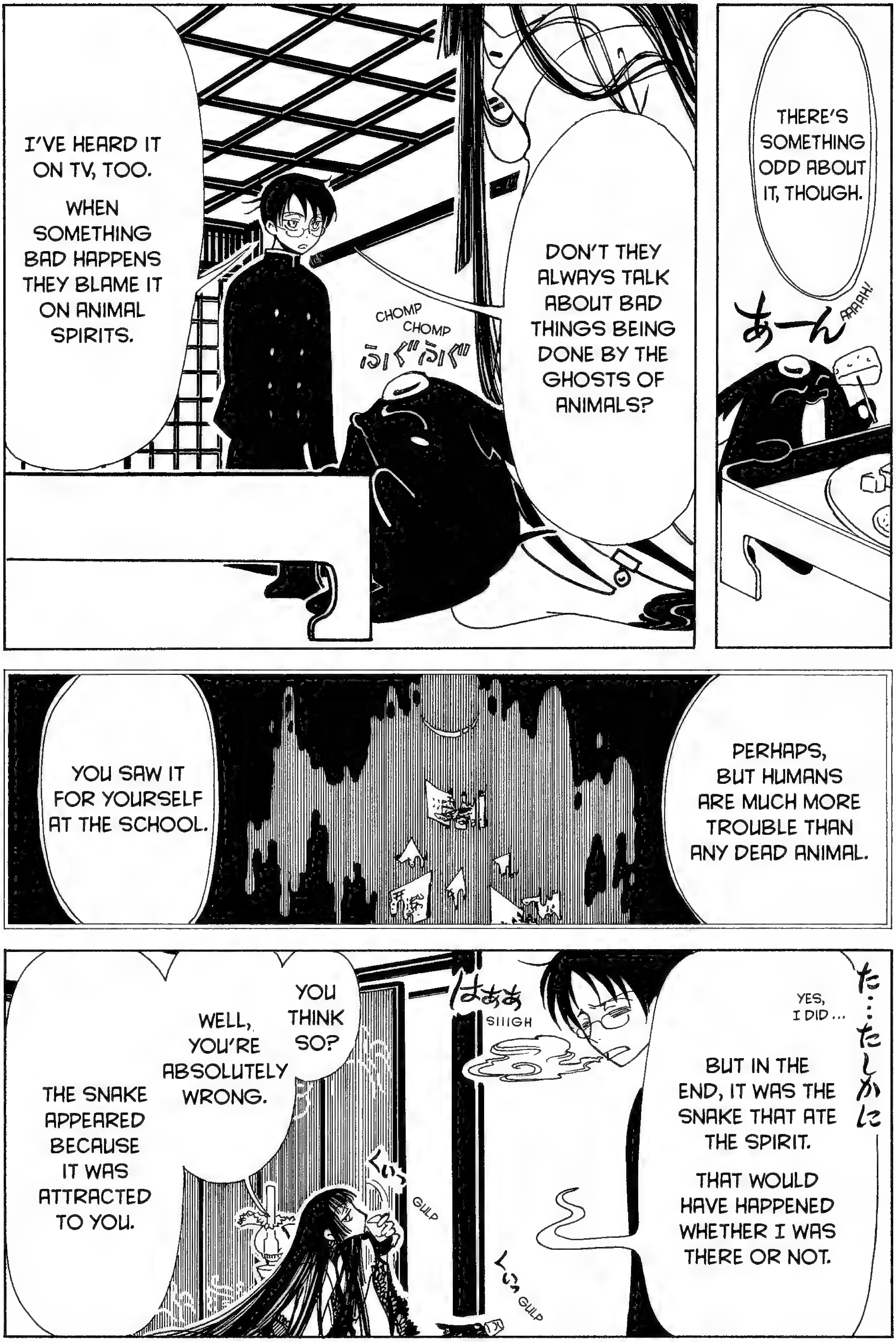

TO THOSE WHO HAVE INHABITED THIS LAND FROM LONG AGO...
SHHHT
...WE PRESENT THIS SACRIFICE...
...TO YOUR BRAVE AND HONORABLE SELVES!


くるり
SLLP
ぱくん
GULP
AH!
ずず
ZUU
ずず
ZUU
ZUU
ZUU
ずず
ZUU
I GUESS...
...WE'RE GOING TO LIVE, HUH?
I DON'T FEEL THE PRESSURE ANYMORE.
Y—
YEAH...
こくり
NOD

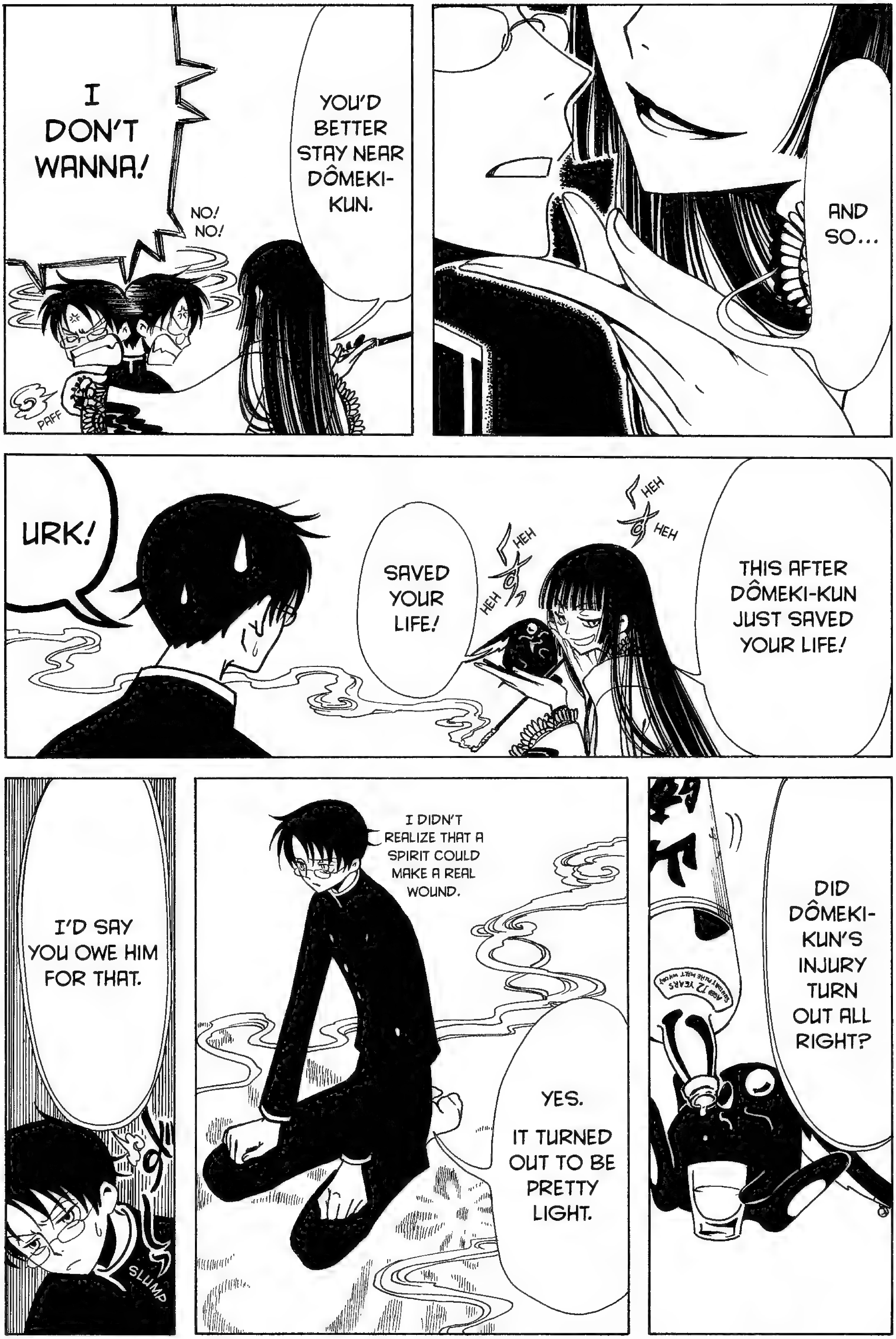

THOSE EARS...
...HAD MORE TO THEM THAN JUST FUNNY LOOKS.
I GUESS...
...THAT'S A FAIR EVALUATION.
AND...
...IT'S A LITTLE DISAPPOINTING THAT WE LOST THEM.
WHY'S THAT?
THEIR LOOKS MATCHED YOUR BRAINS.
SEE?
I'M GONNA THROW YOU OFF THE ROOF!

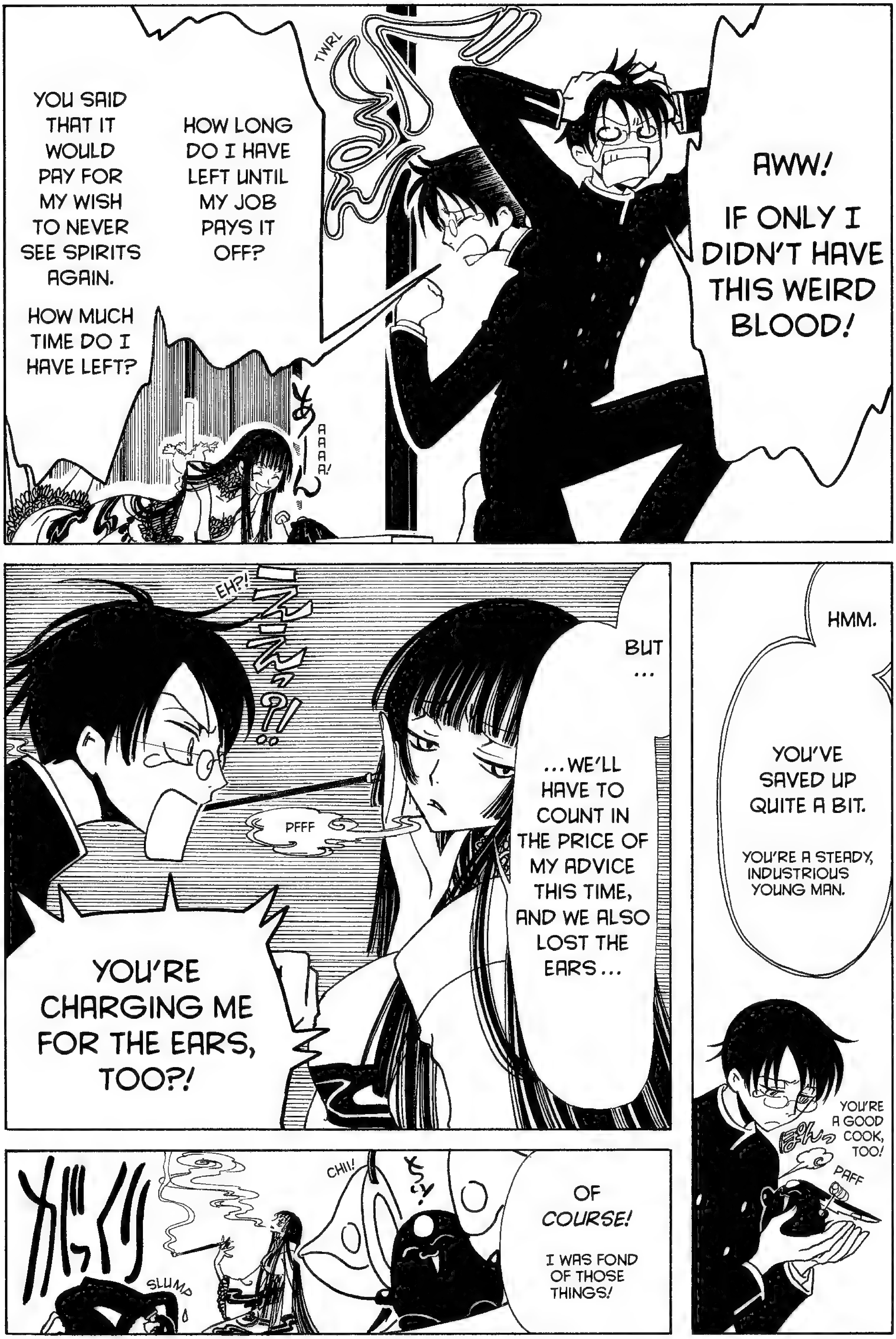

THAT SNAKE...
...IS THE PROTECTOR OF THE AREA.
YOU MEAN IT ISN'T A BAD SPIRIT?
NOT FOR YOU TWO AT THAT PARTICULAR TIME.
GOOD AND EVIL ARE CONCEPTS THAT HUMANS DECIDE.
THOSE CONCEPTS DON'T APPLY TO NON-HUMANS.

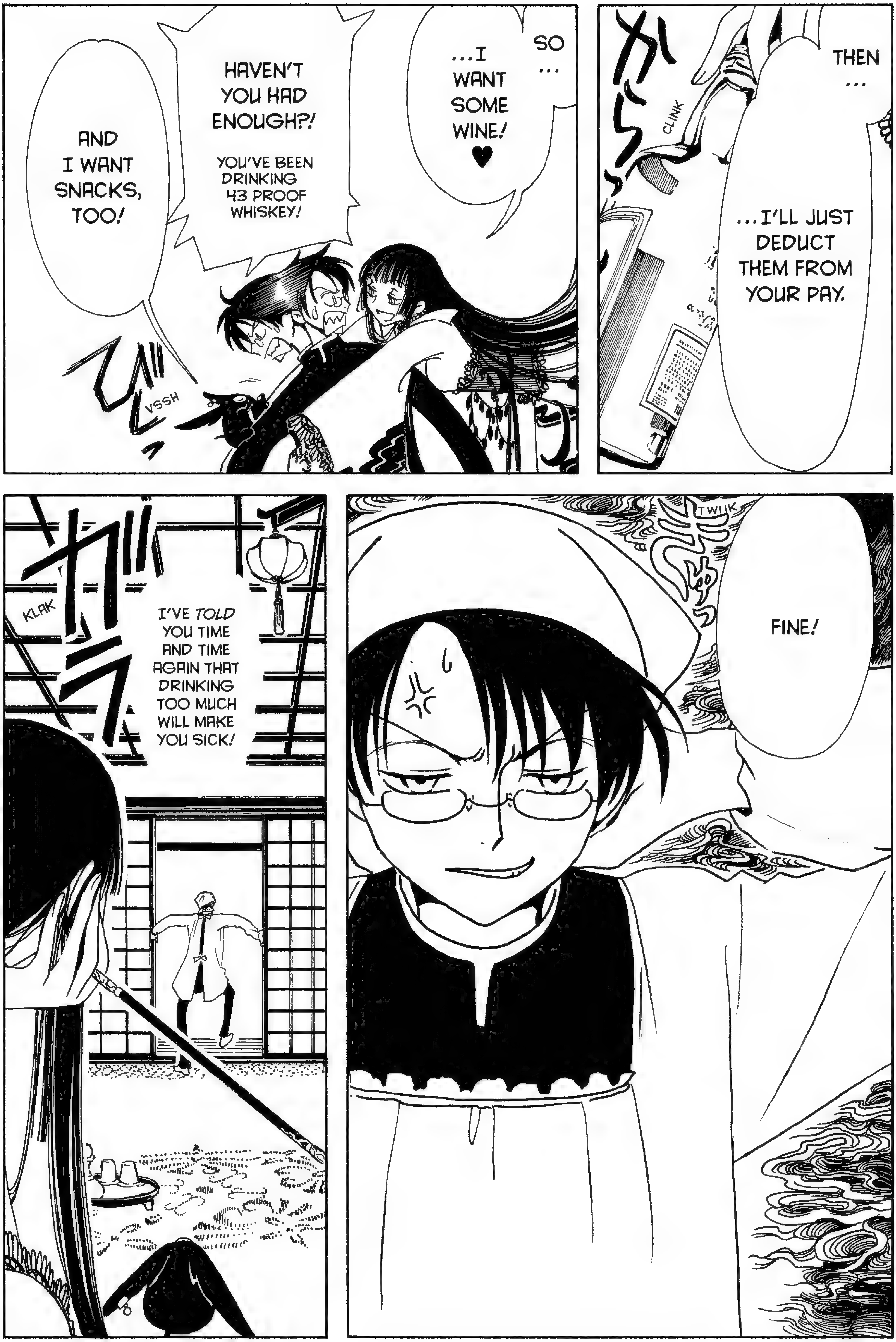

THE SNAKE REMOVES ANYTHING THAT RUNS RAMPANT OVER ITS TERRITORY.
SO THE "DREGS OF THE STUDENTS" WERE RUNNING RAMPANT?
EXACTLY.
IF IT'S SOMETHING THAT EVEN A STUDENT FROM A DIFFERENT SCHOOL COULD HEAR ABOUT, THEN IT DOESN'T HAVE MUCH IN THE WAY OF SUBTLETY.
IF YOU DIDN'T GO TO TAKE CARE OF IT...
...SOMEONE REALLY WOULD HAVE STAYED UNTIL SHE DIED.

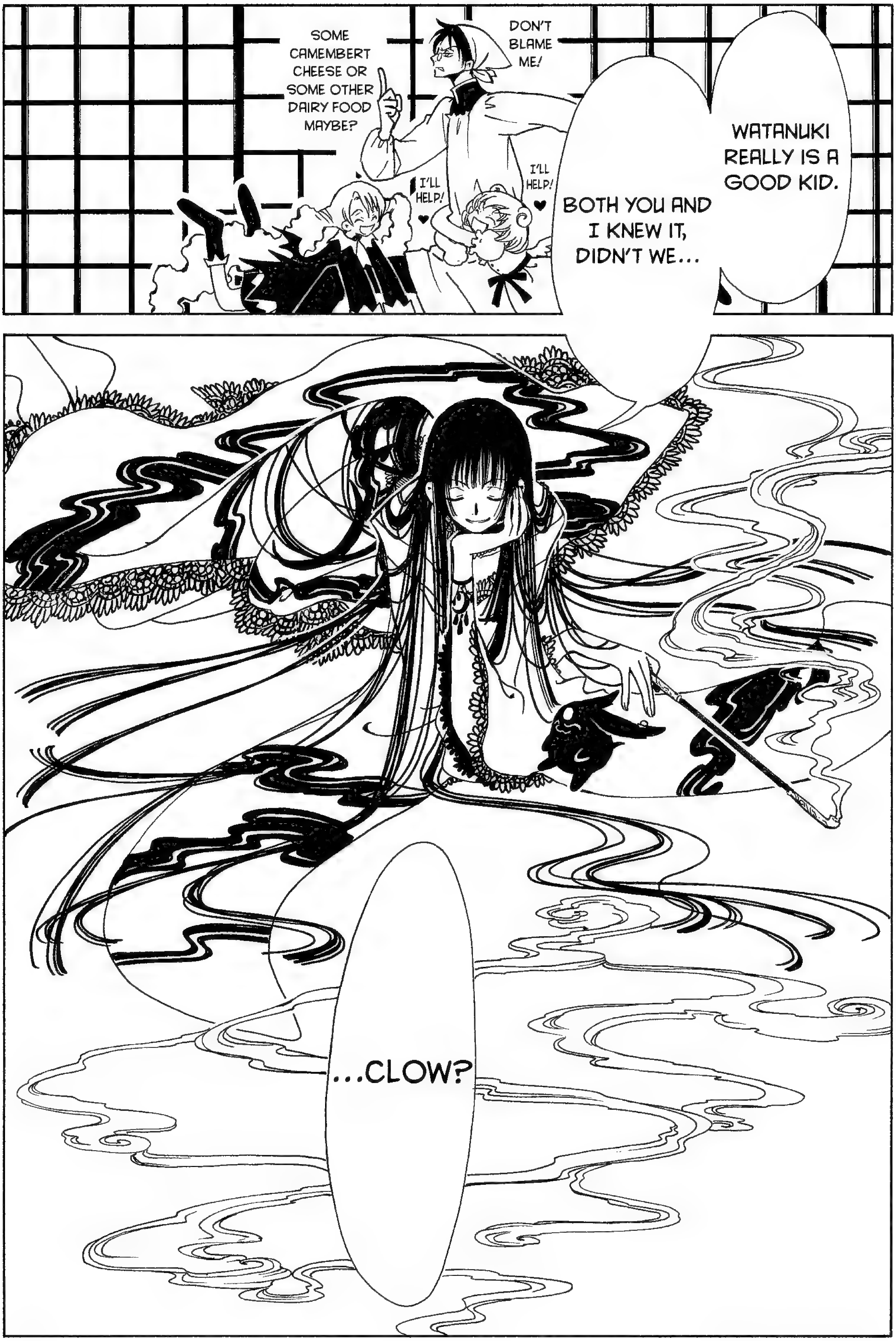

THERE'S SOMETHING ODD ABOUT IT, THOUGH.
あーん
AAAAH!
DON'T THEY ALWAYS TALK ABOUT BAD THINGS BEING DONE BY THE GHOSTS OF ANIMALS?
ふぐふぐ
CHOMP CHOMP
I'VE HEARD IT ON TV, TOO.
WHEN SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS THEY BLAME IT ON ANIMAL SPIRITS.
PERHAPS, BUT HUMANS ARE MUCH MORE TROUBLE THAN ANY DEAD ANIMAL.
YOU SAW IT FOR YOURSELF AT THE SCHOOL.
た…たしかに
YES, I DID...
BUT IN THE END, IT WAS THE SNAKE THAT ATE THE SPIRIT.
THAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED WHETHER I WAS THERE OR NOT.
はあぁ
SIIIGH
YOU THINK SO?
WELL, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY WRONG.
THE SNAKE APPEARED BECAUSE IT WAS ATTRACTED TO YOU.
くいっ
GULP
くいっ
GULP

TO THE SPIRITS, WATANUKI, YOU ARE ONE DELICIOUS MORSEL.
THEY WANT YOU SO BADLY, THEY WOULDN'T MIND GROWING HANDS IN THEIR THROATS SO THEY CAN GRAB YOU AND HAUL YOU IN.

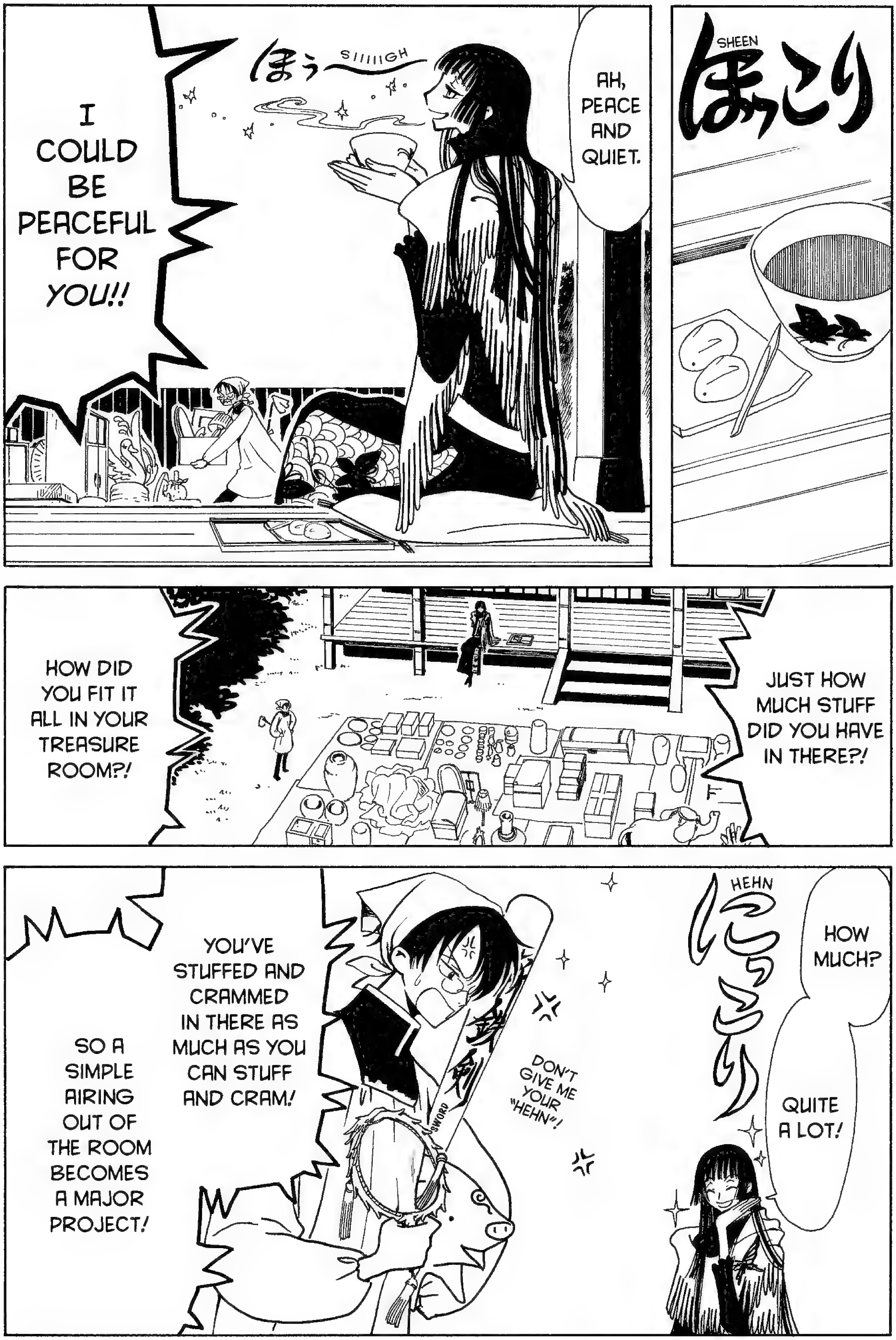

AND SO...
YOU'D BETTER STAY NEAR DÔMEKI-KUN.
I DON'T WANNA!
NO! NO!
PAFF
THIS AFTER DÔMEKI-KUN JUST SAVED YOUR LIFE!
HEH HEH
HEH HEH
SAVED YOUR LIFE!
URK!
DID DÔMEKI-KUN'S INJURY TURN OUT ALL RIGHT?
YES.
IT TURNED OUT TO BE PRETTY LIGHT.
I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT A SPIRIT COULD MAKE A REAL WOUND.
I'D SAY YOU OWE HIM FOR THAT.
SLUMP

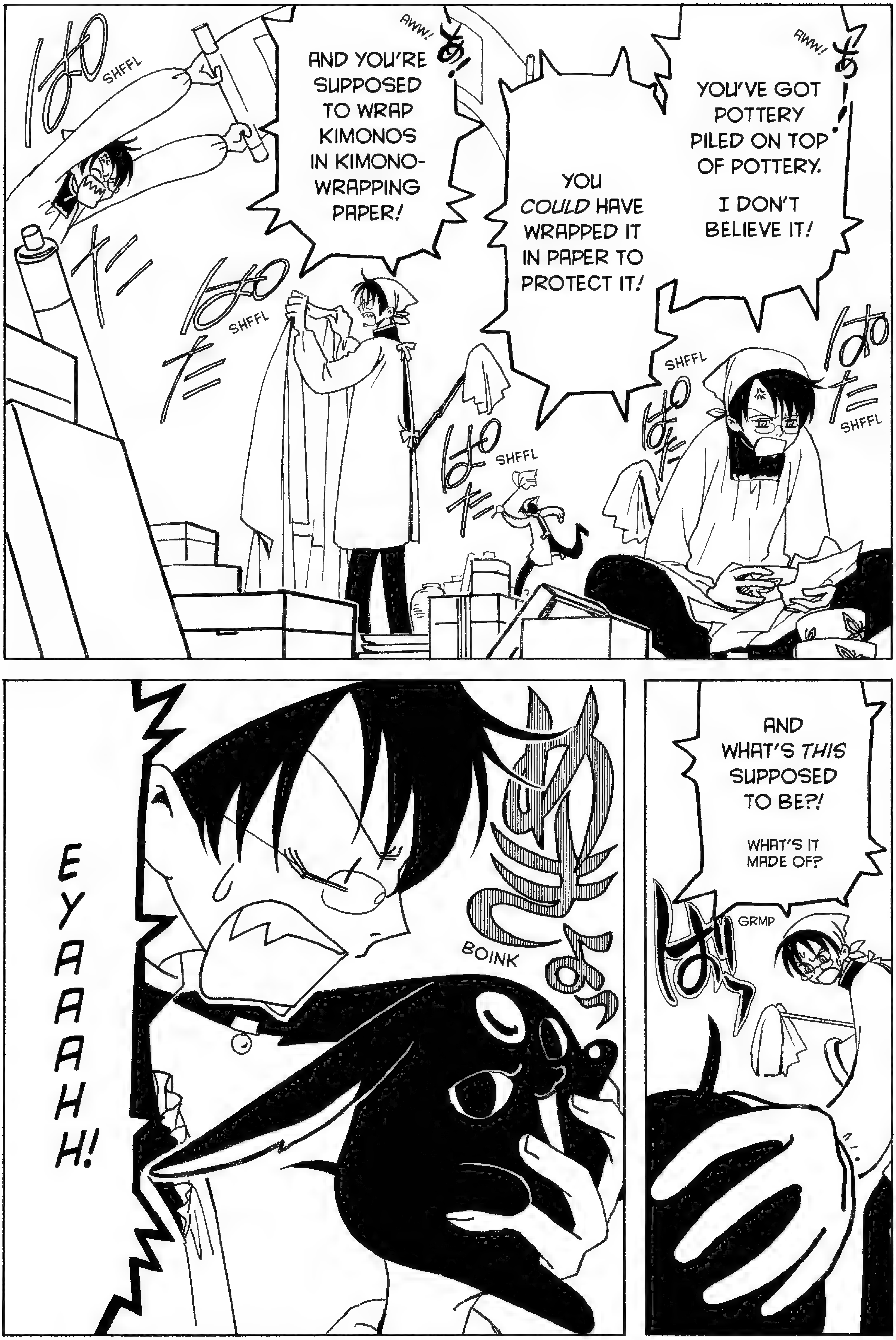

AWW!
IF ONLY I DIDN'T HAVE THIS WEIRD BLOOD!
TWRL
HOW LONG DO I HAVE LEFT UNTIL MY JOB PAYS IT OFF?
YOU SAID THAT IT WOULD PAY FOR MY WISH TO NEVER SEE SPIRITS AGAIN.
HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE LEFT?
AAAA!
HMM.
YOU'VE SAVED UP QUITE A BIT.
YOU'RE A STEADY, INDUSTRIOUS YOUNG MAN.
YOU'RE A GOOD COOK, TOO!
PAFF
BUT ...
...WE'LL HAVE TO COUNT IN THE PRICE OF MY ADVICE THIS TIME, AND WE ALSO LOST THE EARS...
PFFF
EH?!
YOU'RE CHARGING ME FOR THE EARS, TOO?!
OF COURSE!
I WAS FOND OF THOSE THINGS!
CHII!
SLUMP

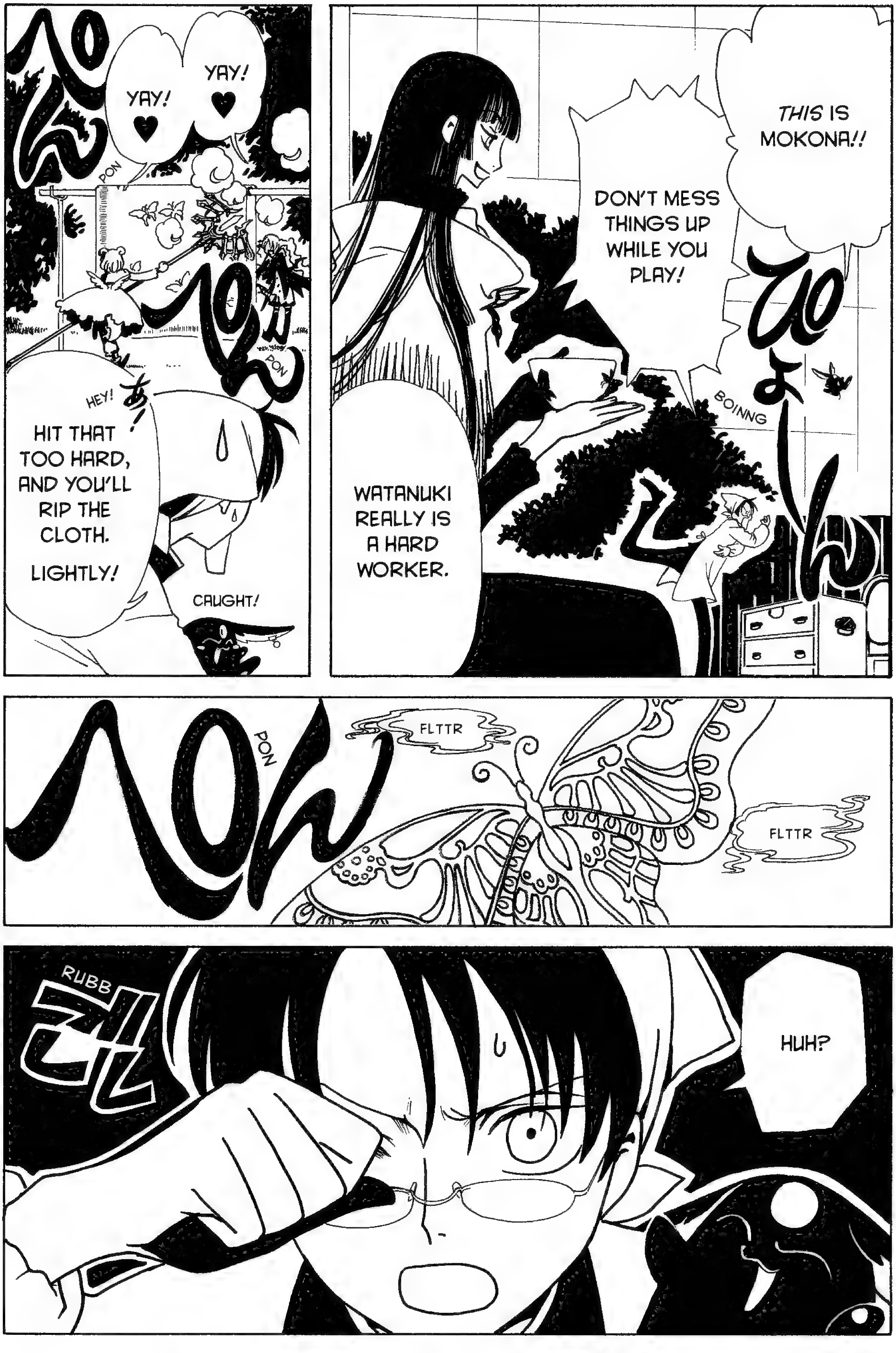

THEN ...
...I'LL JUST DEDUCT THEM FROM YOUR PAY.
CLINK
SO ...
...I WANT SOME WINE! ♥
HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH?!
YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING 43 PROOF WHISKEY!
AND I WANT SNACKS, TOO!
VSSH
FINE!
TWIK
きゅっ
I'VE *TOLD* YOU TIME AND TIME AGAIN THAT DRINKING TOO MUCH WILL MAKE YOU SICK!
ガラッ
KLAK

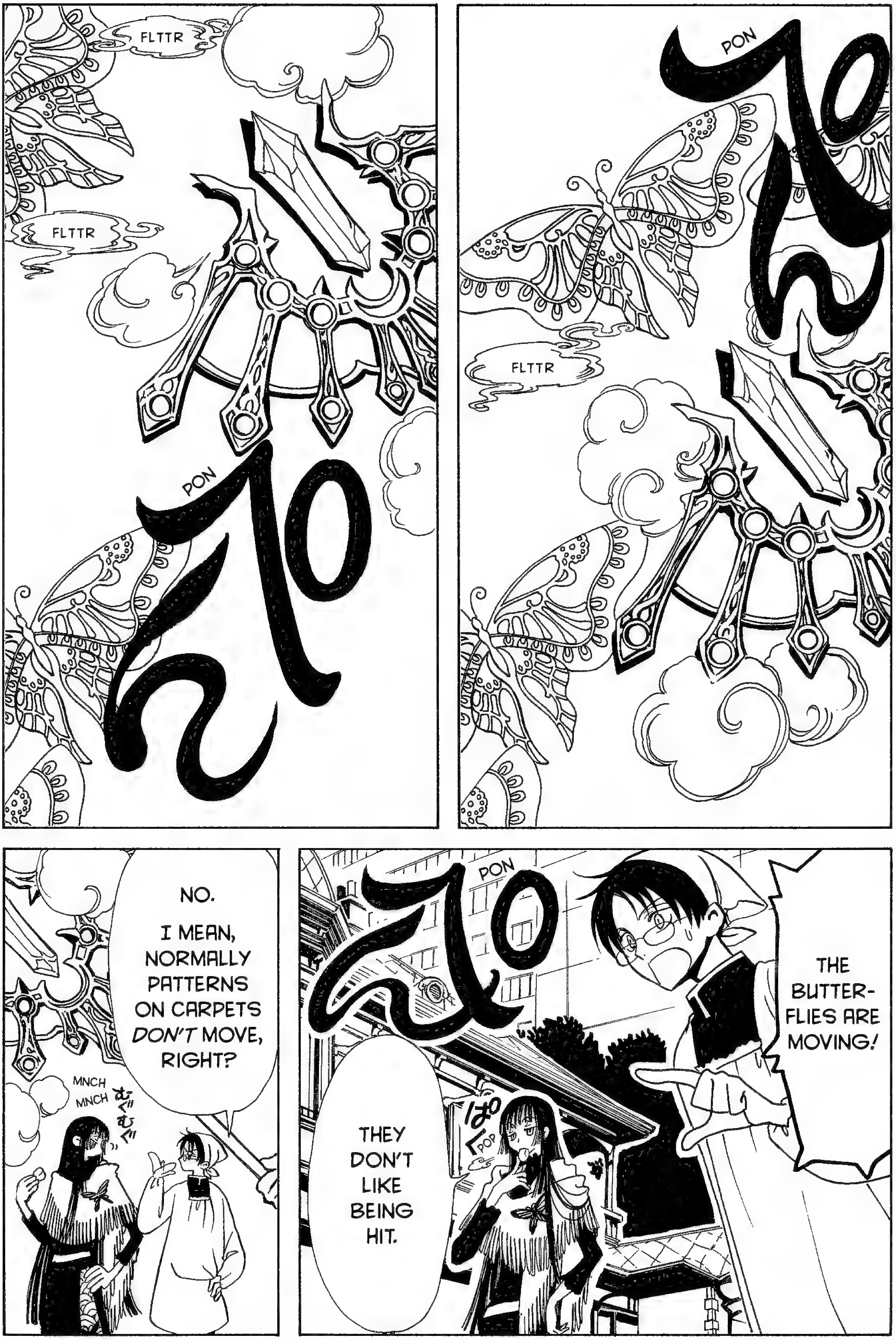

WATANUKI REALLY IS A GOOD KID.
BOTH YOU AND I KNEW IT, DIDN'T WE...
DON'T BLAME ME!
I'LL HELP! ♥
SOME CAMEMBERT CHEESE OR SOME OTHER DAIRY FOOD MAYBE?
I'LL HELP! ♥
...CLOW?

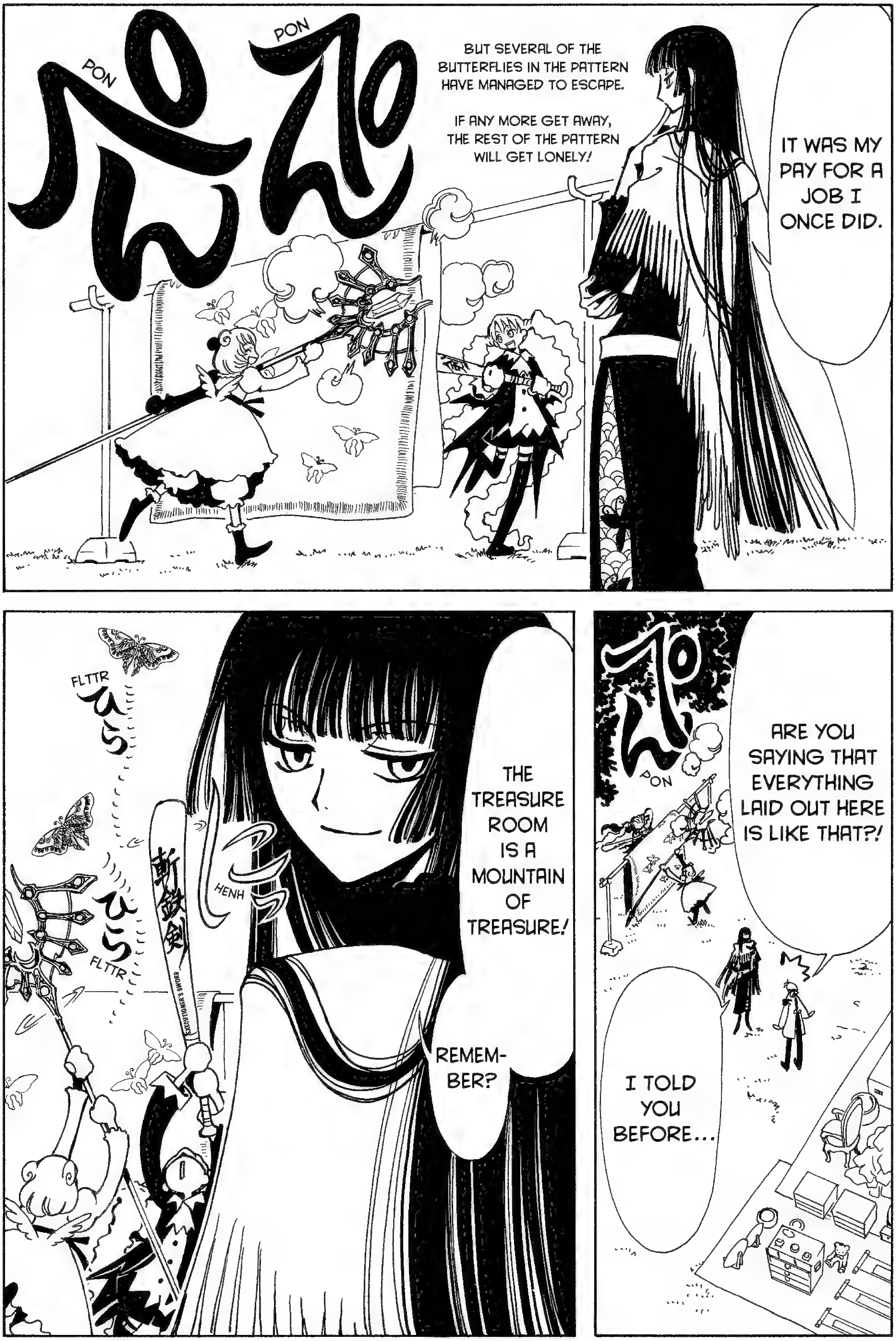
xxxHOLiC
～×××ホリック～

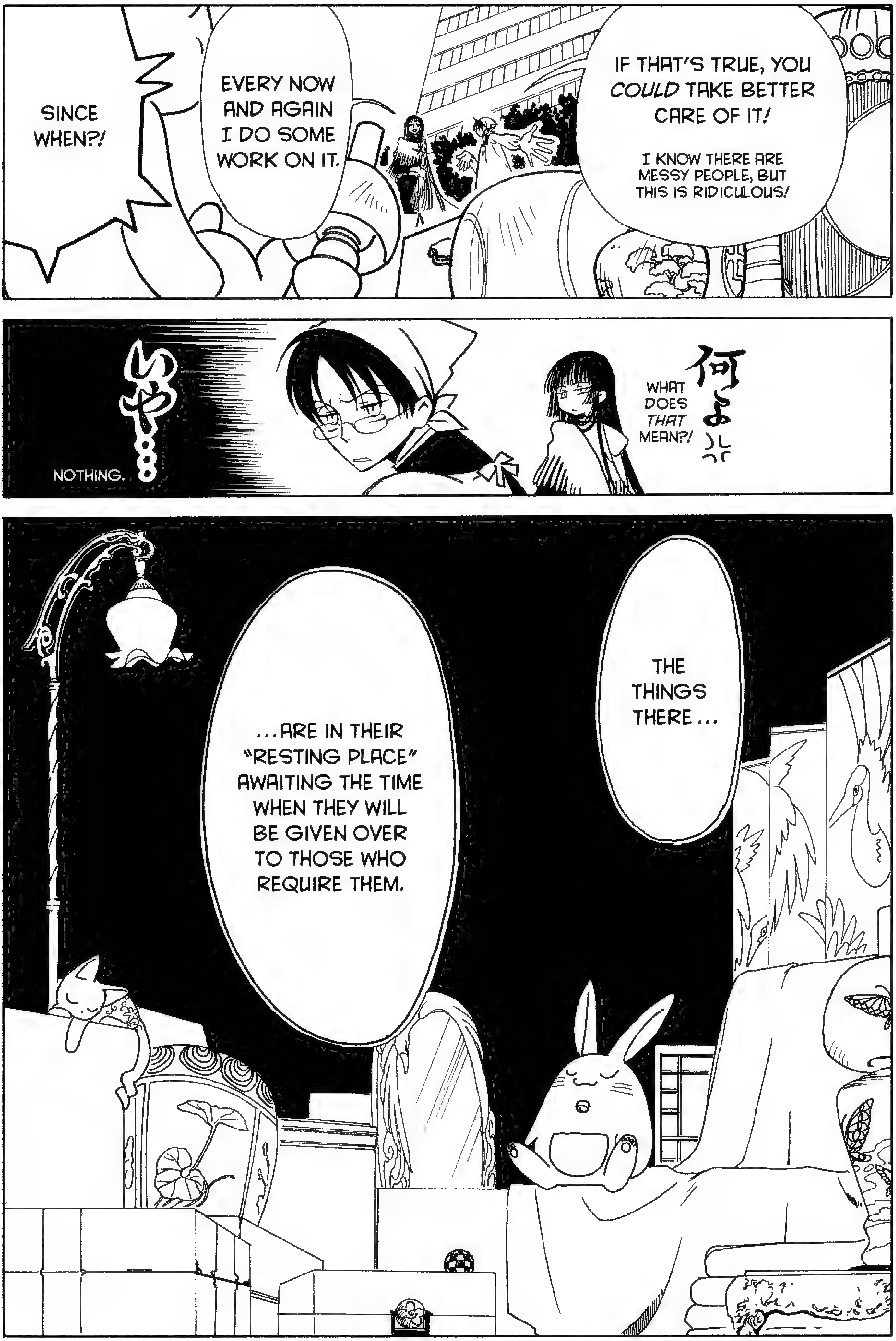

SHEEN
ほっこり
AH, PEACE AND QUIET.
ほう〜
SIIIIGH
I COULD BE PEACEFUL FOR *YOU!!*
JUST HOW MUCH STUFF DID YOU HAVE IN THERE?!
HOW DID YOU FIT IT ALL IN YOUR TREASURE ROOM?!
HOW MUCH?
QUITE A LOT!
HEHN
にっこり
DON'T GIVE ME YOUR "HEHN"!
SWORD
YOU'VE STUFFED AND CRAMMED IN THERE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN STUFF AND CRAM!
SO A SIMPLE AIRING OUT OF THE ROOM BECOMES A MAJOR PROJECT!

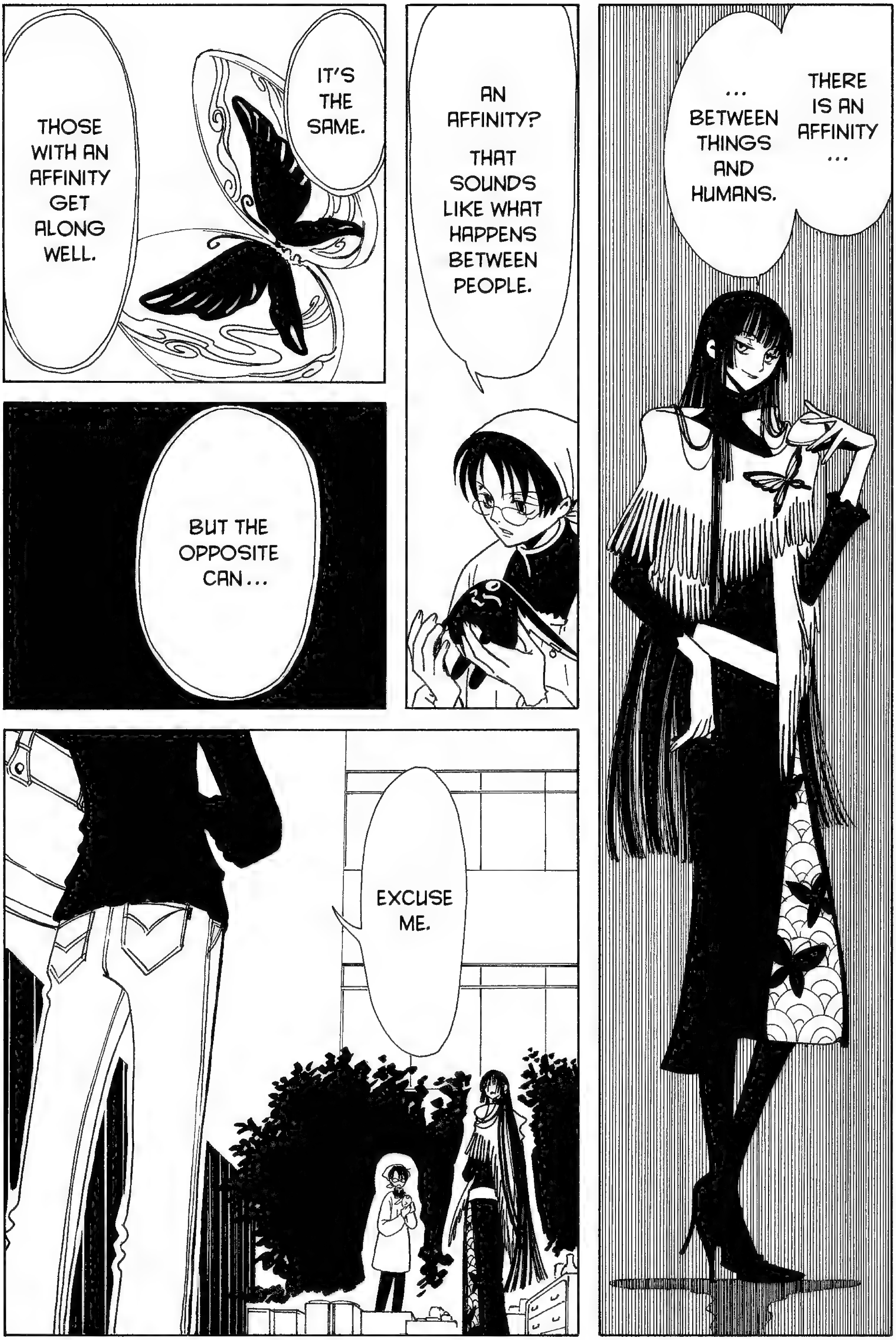

あ!
AWW!
YOU'VE GOT POTTERY PILED ON TOP OF POTTERY.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
SHFFL
SHFFL
YOU *COULD* HAVE WRAPPED IT IN PAPER TO PROTECT IT!
あ!
AWW!
AND YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO WRAP KIMONOS IN KIMONO-WRAPPING PAPER!
SHFFL
SHFFL
SHFFL
AND WHAT'S *THIS* SUPPOSED TO BE?!
WHAT'S IT MADE OF?
GRMP
BOINK
EYAAAAAH!

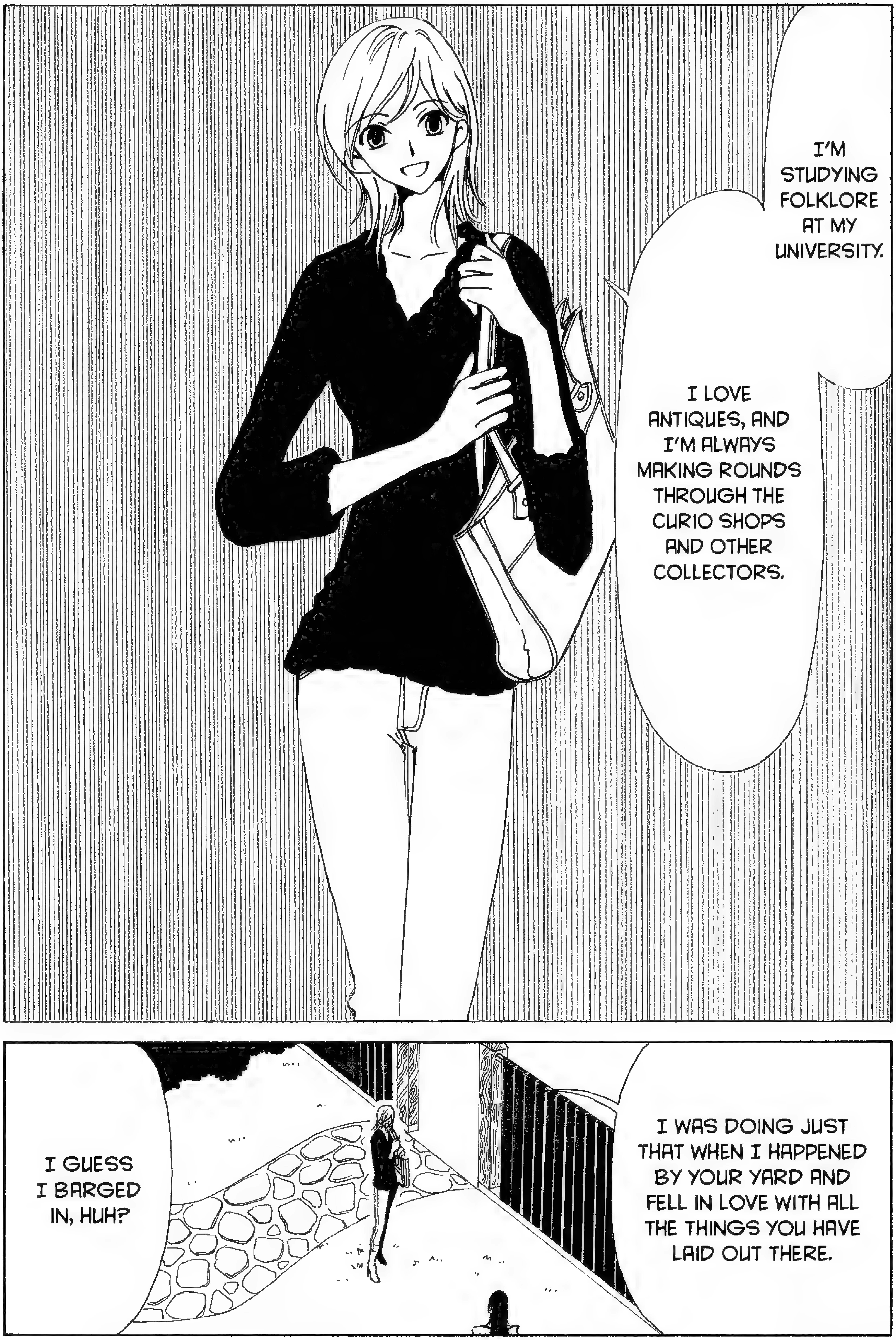

THIS IS MOKONA!!
DON'T MESS THINGS UP WHILE YOU PLAY!
BOINNG
WATANUKI REALLY IS A HARD WORKER.
YAY! ♥
YAY! ♥
PON
PON
HEY!
HIT THAT TOO HARD, AND YOU'LL RIP THE CLOTH.
LIGHTLY!
CAUGHT!
PON
FLTTR
FLTTR
HUH?
RUBB

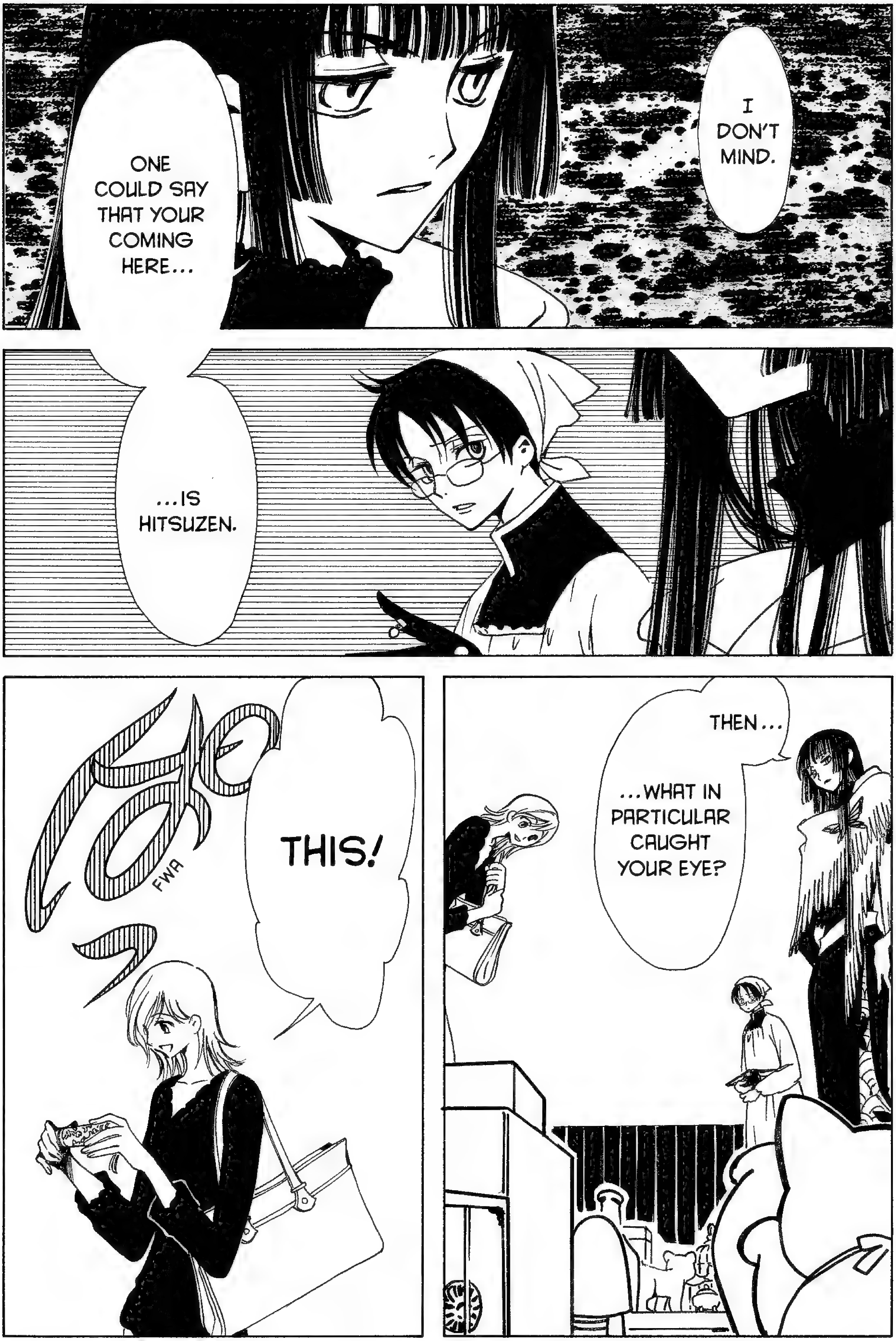

PON
FLTTR
FLTTR
FLTTR
PON
THE BUTTER-FLIES ARE MOVING!
PON
THEY DON'T LIKE BEING HIT.
ぱ POP
NO.
I MEAN, NORMALLY PATTERNS ON CARPETS *DON'T* MOVE, RIGHT?
MNCH MNCH むぐむぐ

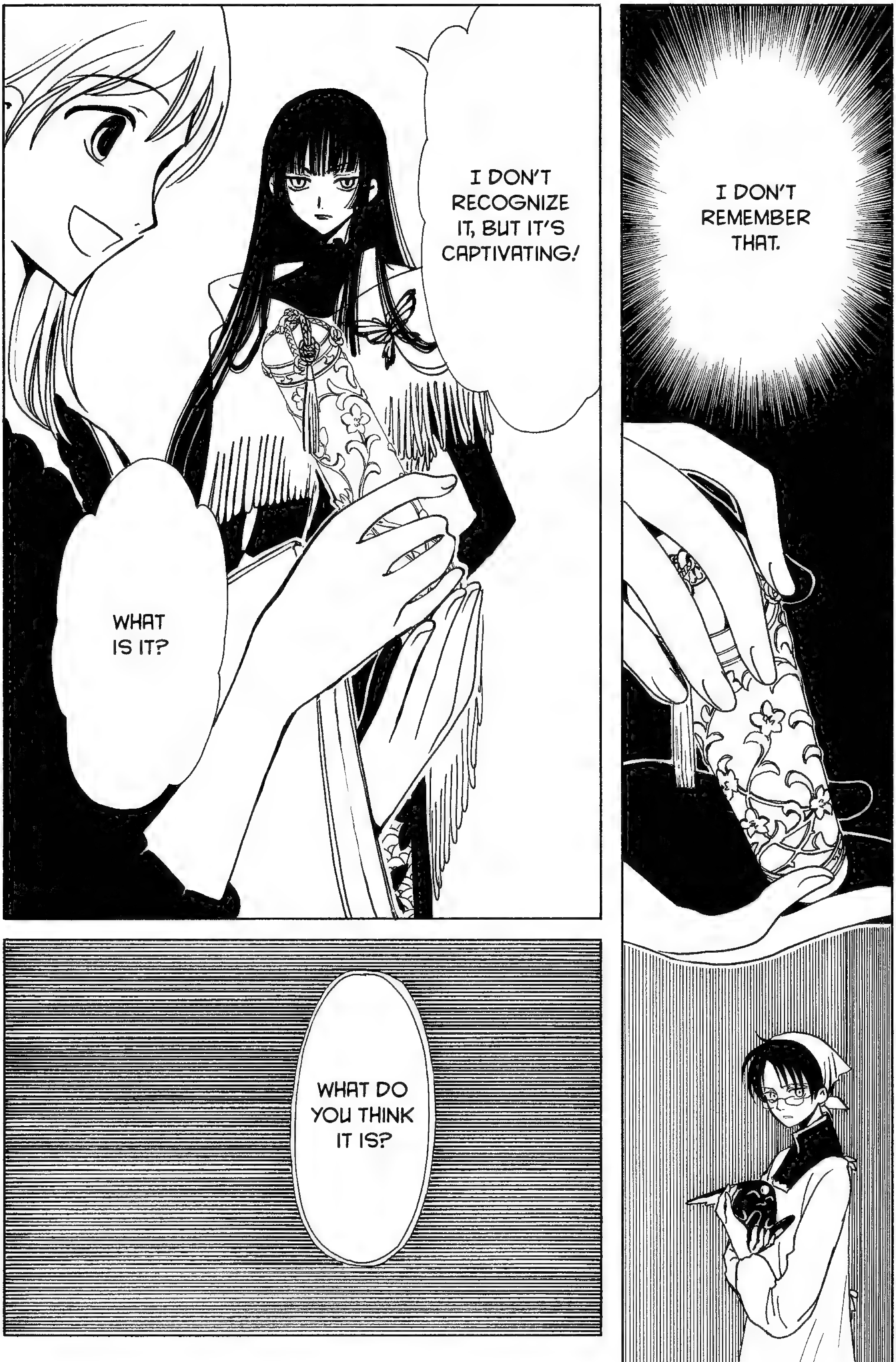

IT WAS MY PAY FOR A JOB I ONCE DID.
BUT SEVERAL OF THE BUTTERFLIES IN THE PATTERN HAVE MANAGED TO ESCAPE.
IF ANY MORE GET AWAY, THE REST OF THE PATTERN WILL GET LONELY!
ぽん PON
ぽん PON
ARE YOU SAYING THAT EVERYTHING LAID OUT HERE IS LIKE THAT?!
ぽん PON
I TOLD YOU BEFORE...
THE TREASURE ROOM IS A MOUNTAIN OF TREASURE!
REMEMBER?
HENH
斬鉄剣 EXECUTIONER'S SWORD
ひら FLTTR
ひら FLTTR

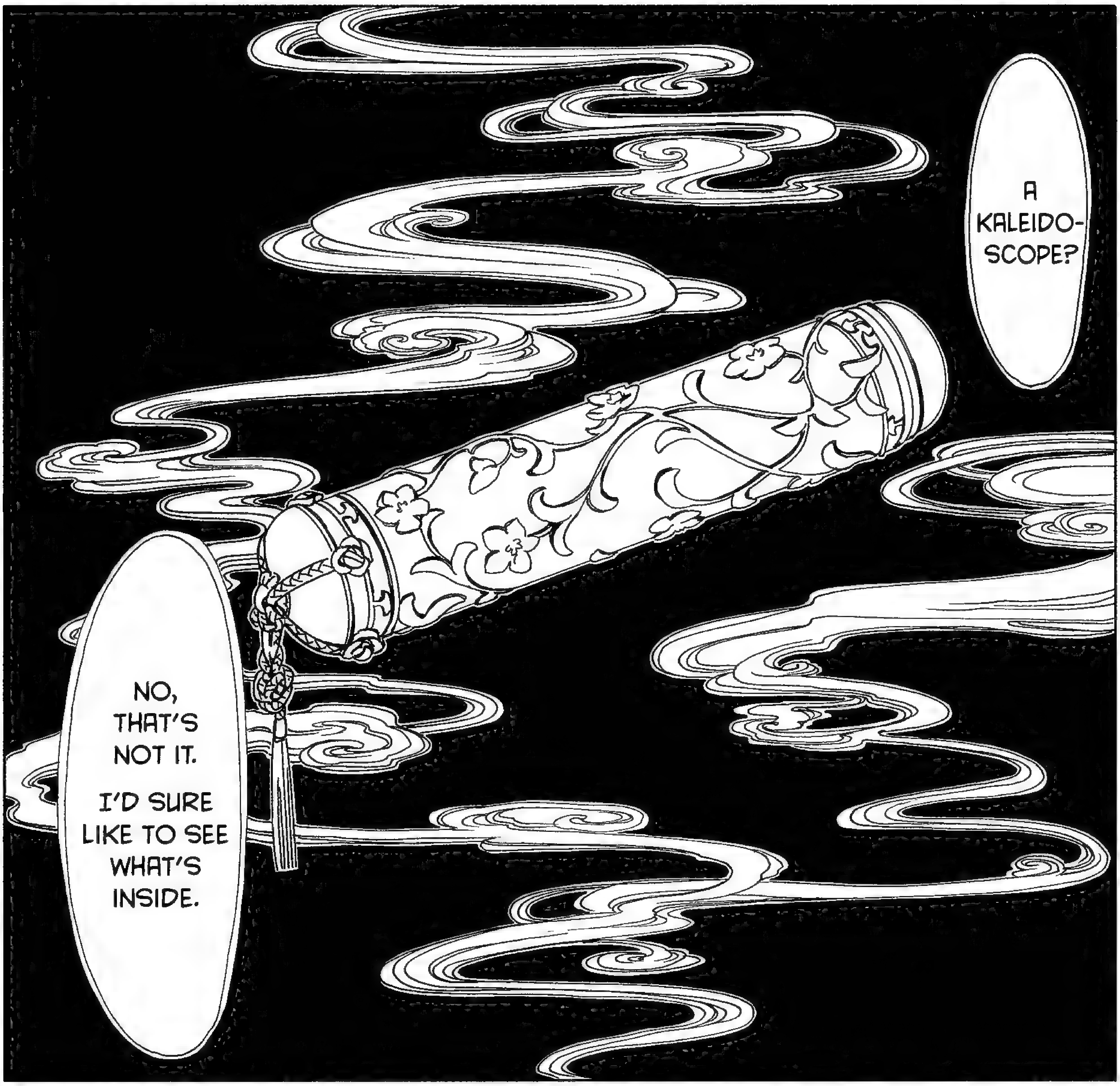

IF THAT'S TRUE, YOU *COULD* TAKE BETTER CARE OF IT!
I KNOW THERE ARE MESSY PEOPLE, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
EVERY NOW AND AGAIN I DO SOME WORK ON IT.
SINCE WHEN?!
何よ
WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN?!
いや・・・
NOTHING.
THE THINGS THERE...
...ARE IN THEIR "RESTING PLACE" AWAITING THE TIME WHEN THEY WILL BE GIVEN OVER TO THOSE WHO REQUIRE THEM.

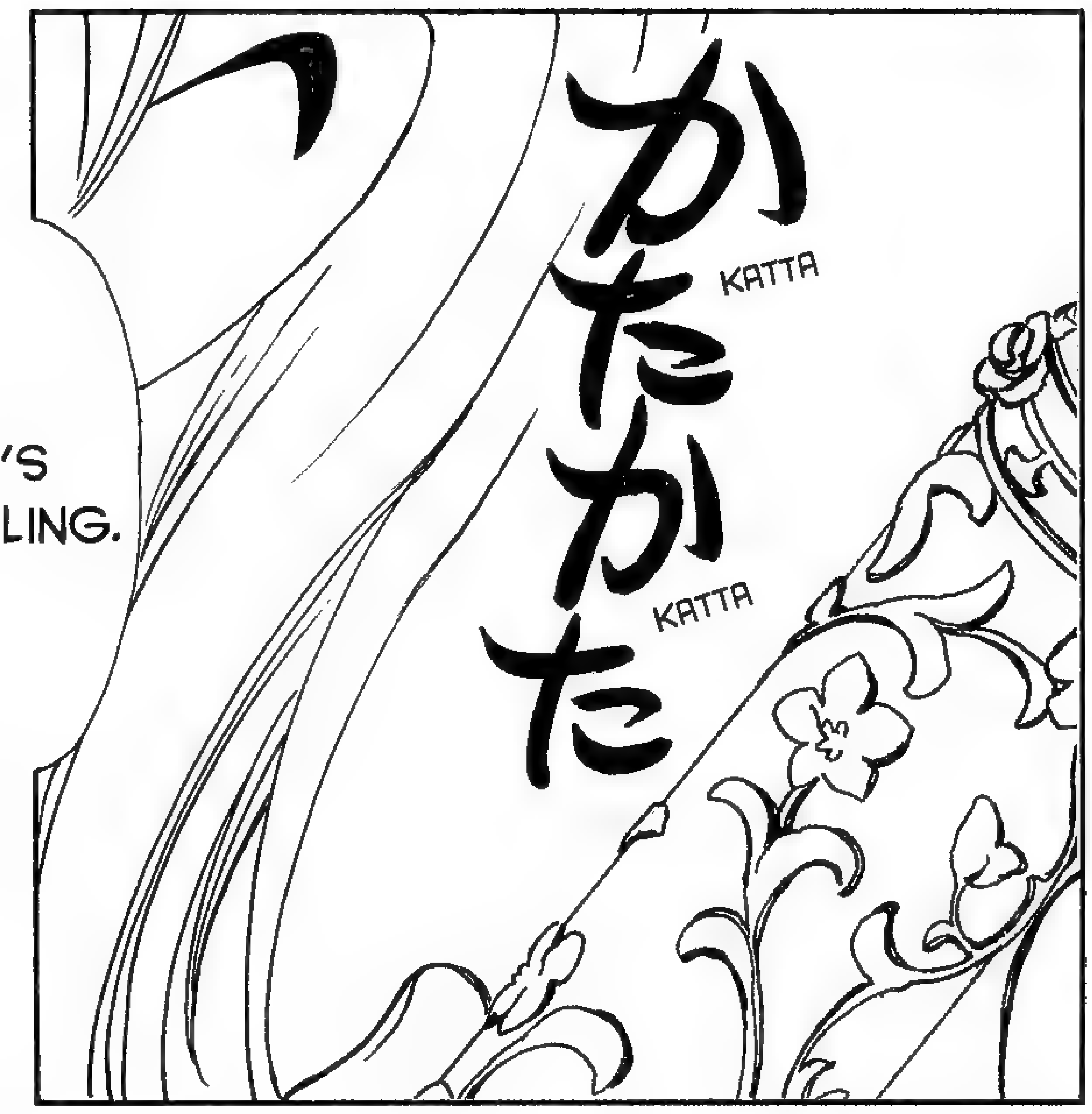

THERE IS AN AFFINITY…
…BETWEEN THINGS AND HUMANS.
AN AFFINITY? THAT SOUNDS LIKE WHAT HAPPENS BETWEEN PEOPLE.
IT'S THE SAME.
THOSE WITH AN AFFINITY GET ALONG WELL.
BUT THE OPPOSITE CAN…
EXCUSE ME.

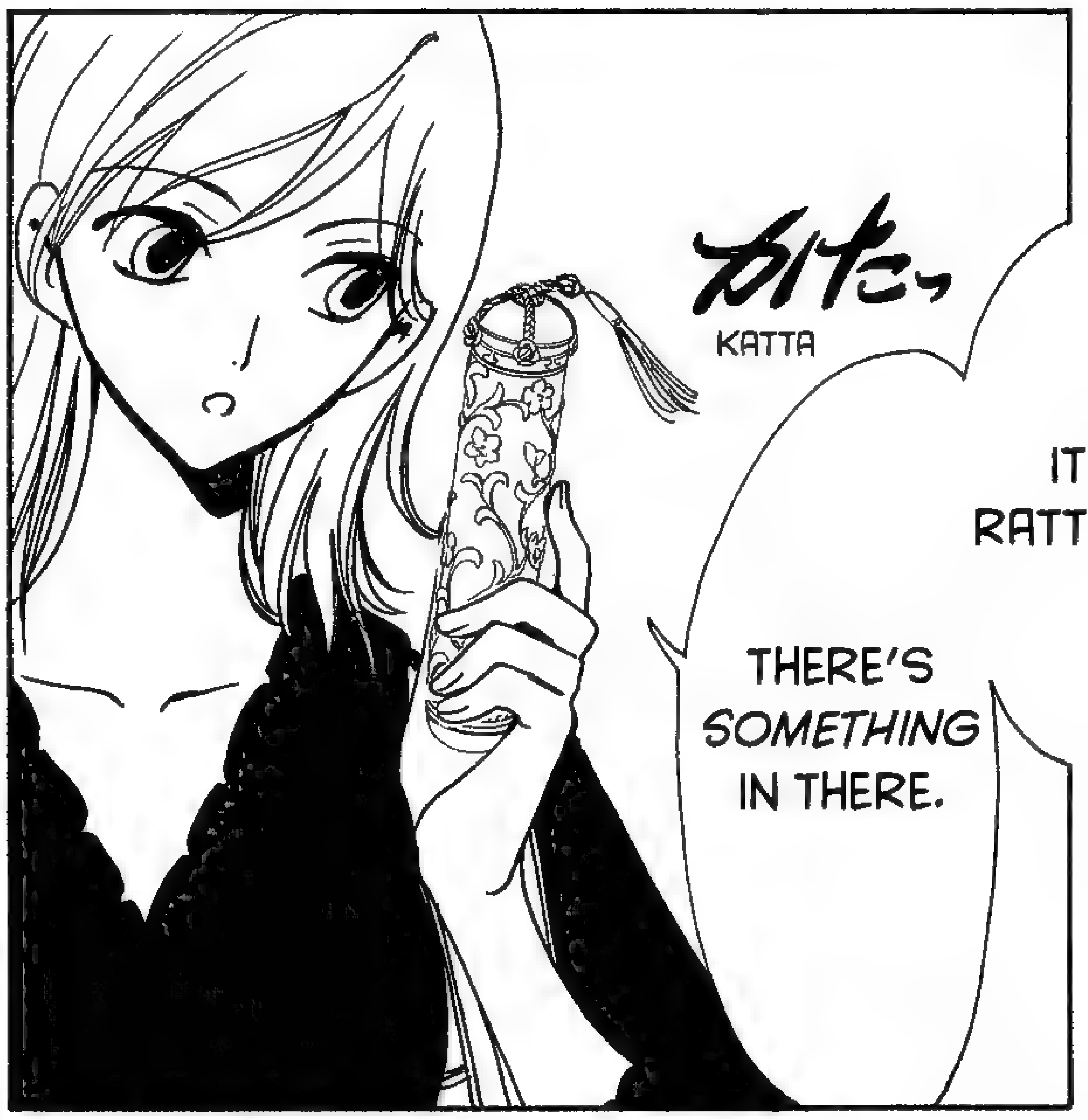

I'M STUDYING FOLKLORE AT MY UNIVERSITY.
I LOVE ANTIQUES, AND I'M ALWAYS MAKING ROUNDS THROUGH THE CURIO SHOPS AND OTHER COLLECTORS.
I WAS DOING JUST THAT WHEN I HAPPENED BY YOUR YARD AND FELL IN LOVE WITH ALL THE THINGS YOU HAVE LAID OUT THERE.
I GUESS I BARGED IN, HUH?

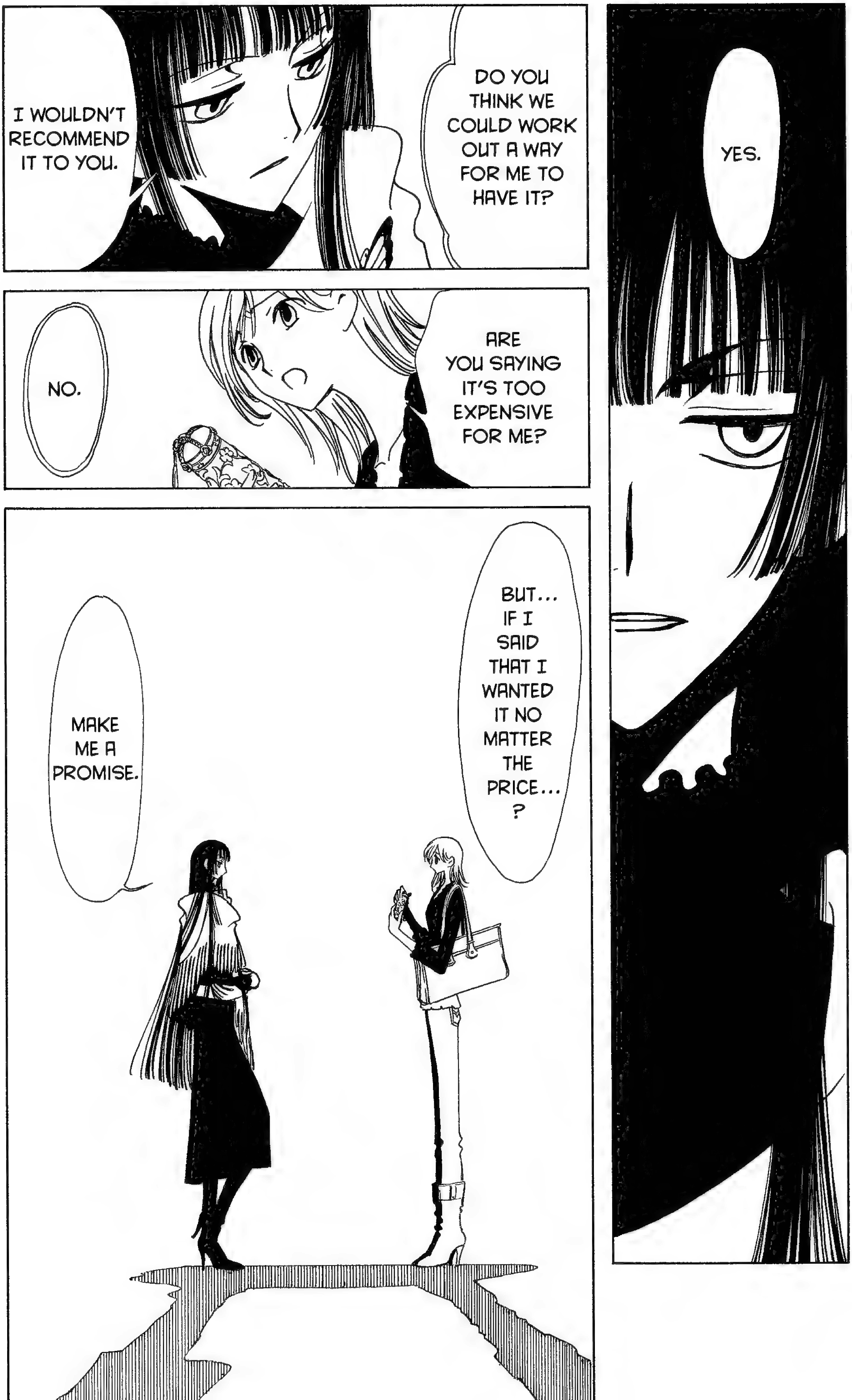

I DON'T MIND.
ONE COULD SAY THAT YOUR COMING HERE...
...IS HITSUZEN.
THEN...
...WHAT IN PARTICULAR CAUGHT YOUR EYE?
THIS!
FWA

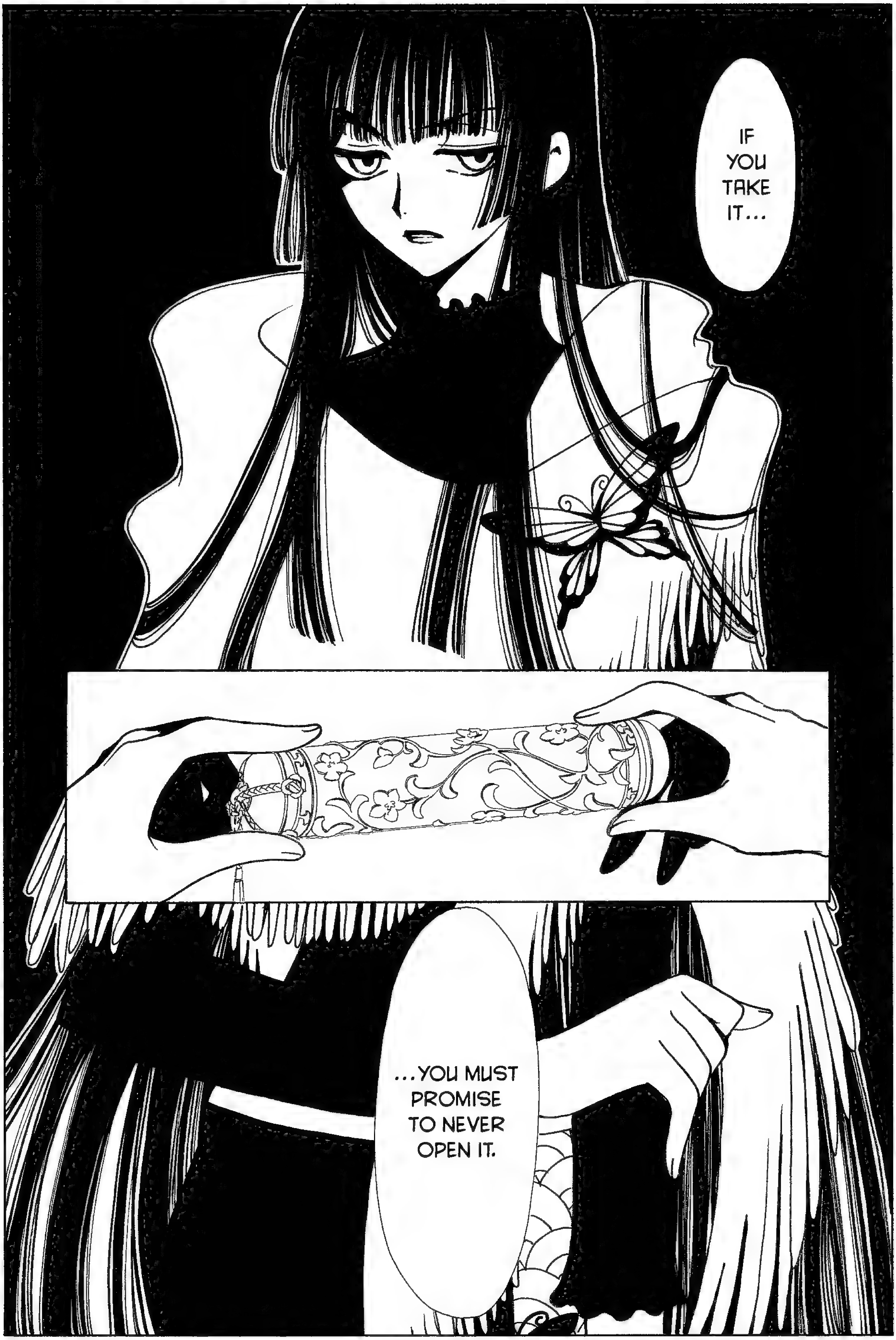

I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.
I DON'T RECOGNIZE IT, BUT IT'S CAPTIVATING!
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?


A KALEIDO-SCOPE?
NO, THAT'S NOT IT. I'D SURE LIKE TO SEE WHAT'S INSIDE.

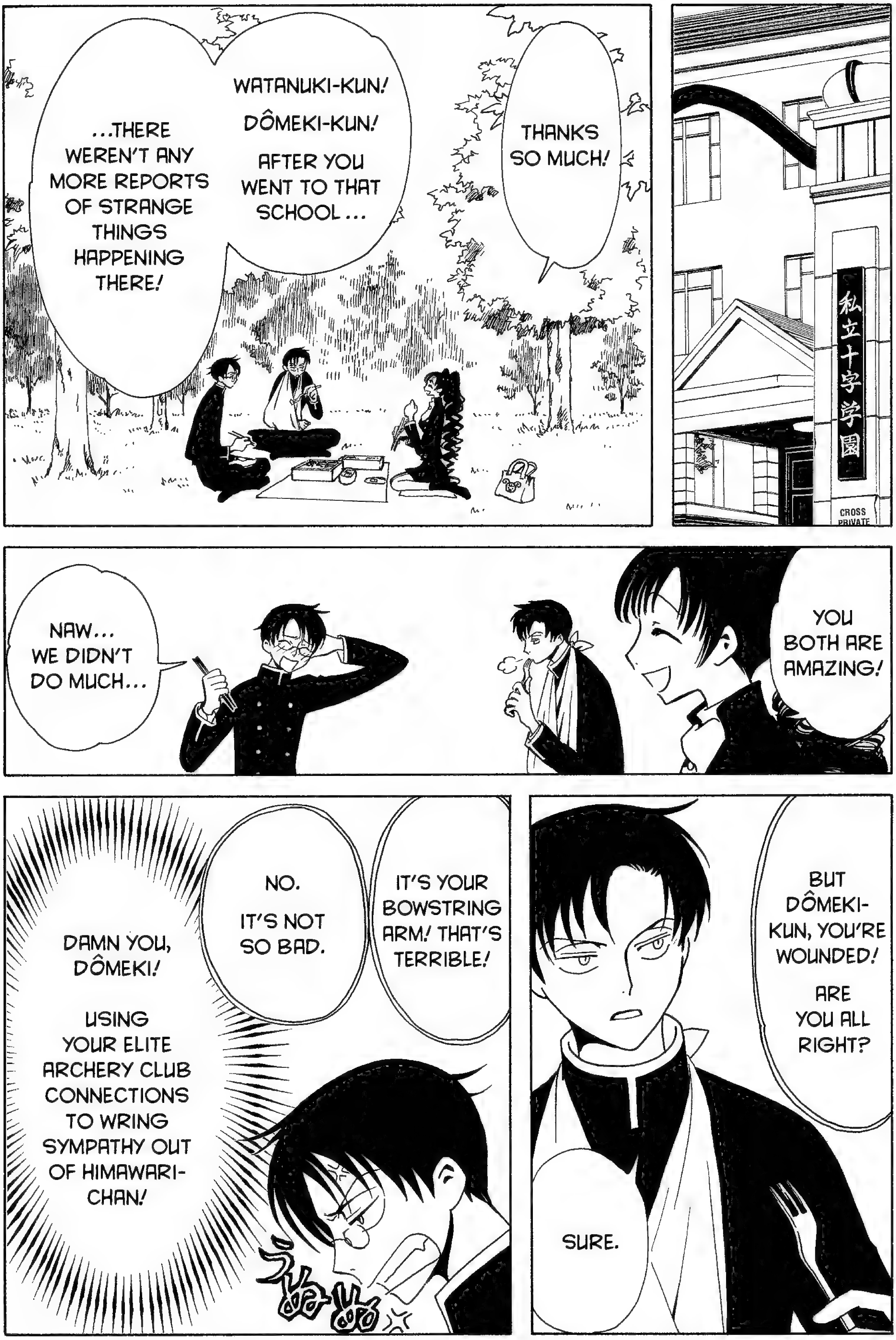

かたかた
KATTA
KATTA

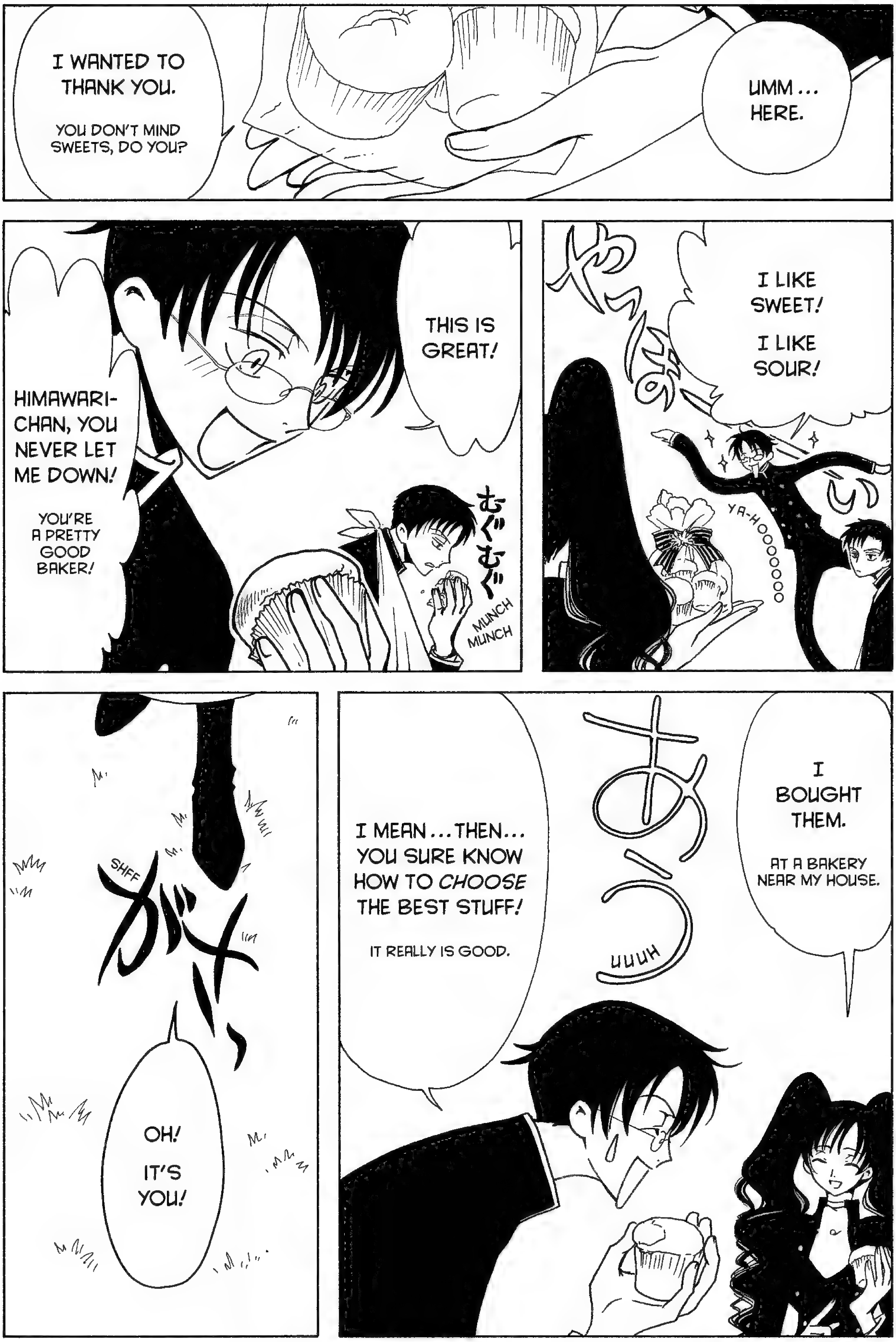

かたっ
KATTA
IT'S RATTLING.
THERE'S *SOMETHING* IN THERE.

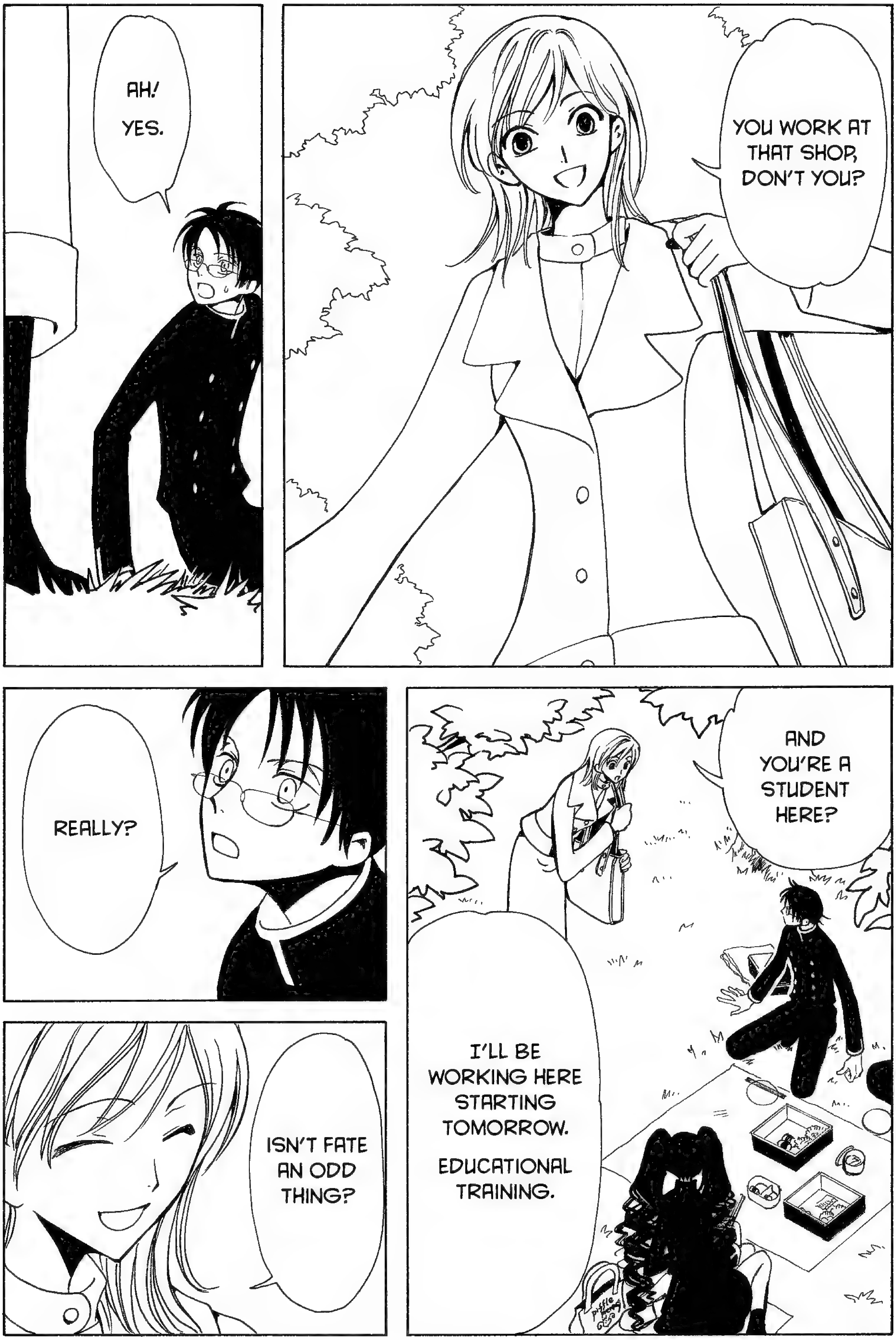

DO YOU THINK WE COULD WORK OUT A WAY FOR ME TO HAVE IT?
I WOULDN'T RECOMMEND IT TO YOU.
ARE YOU SAYING IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE FOR ME?
NO.
BUT... IF I SAID THAT I WANTED IT NO MATTER THE PRICE...?
MAKE ME A PROMISE.
YES.

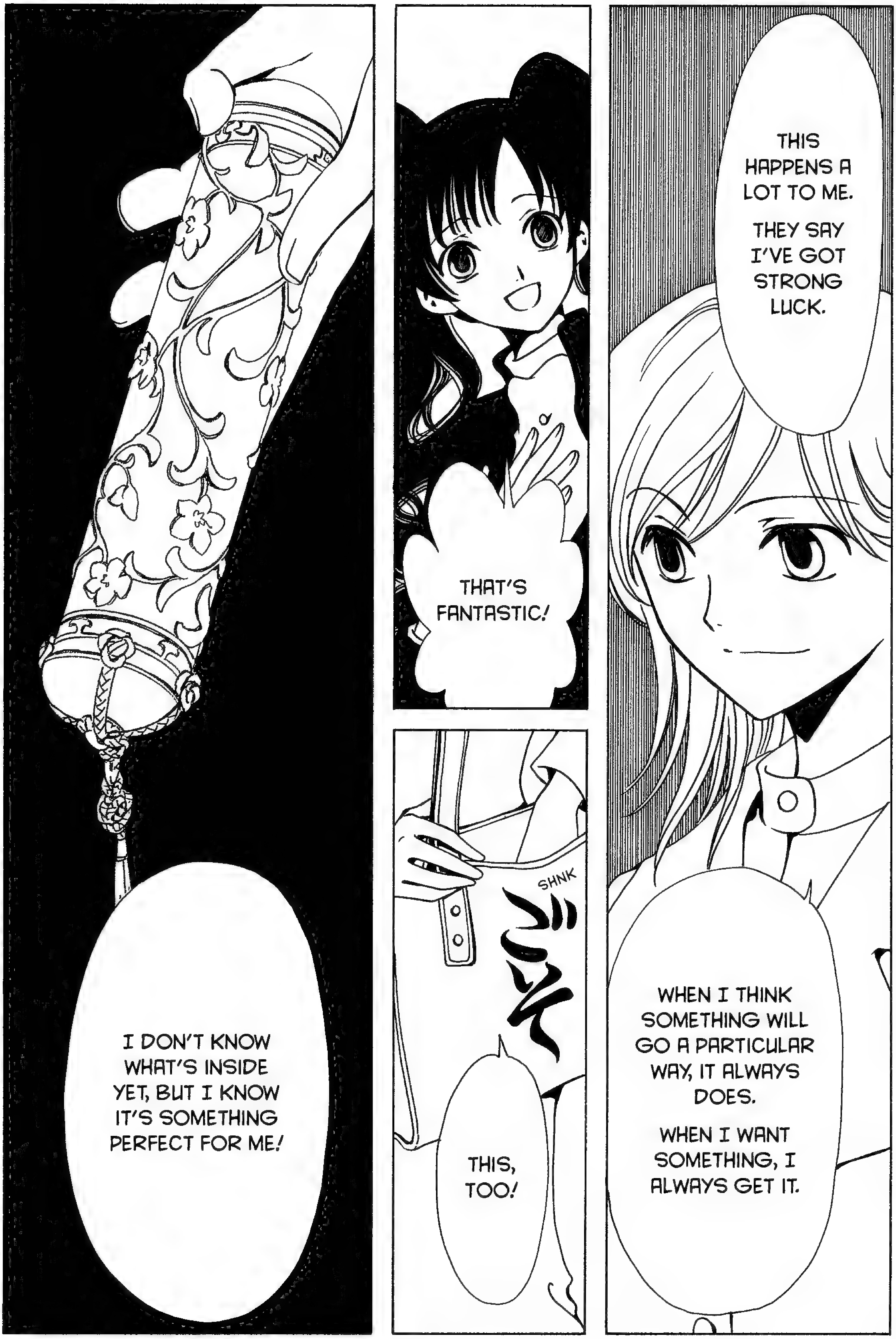

IF YOU TAKE IT...
...YOU MUST PROMISE TO NEVER OPEN IT.

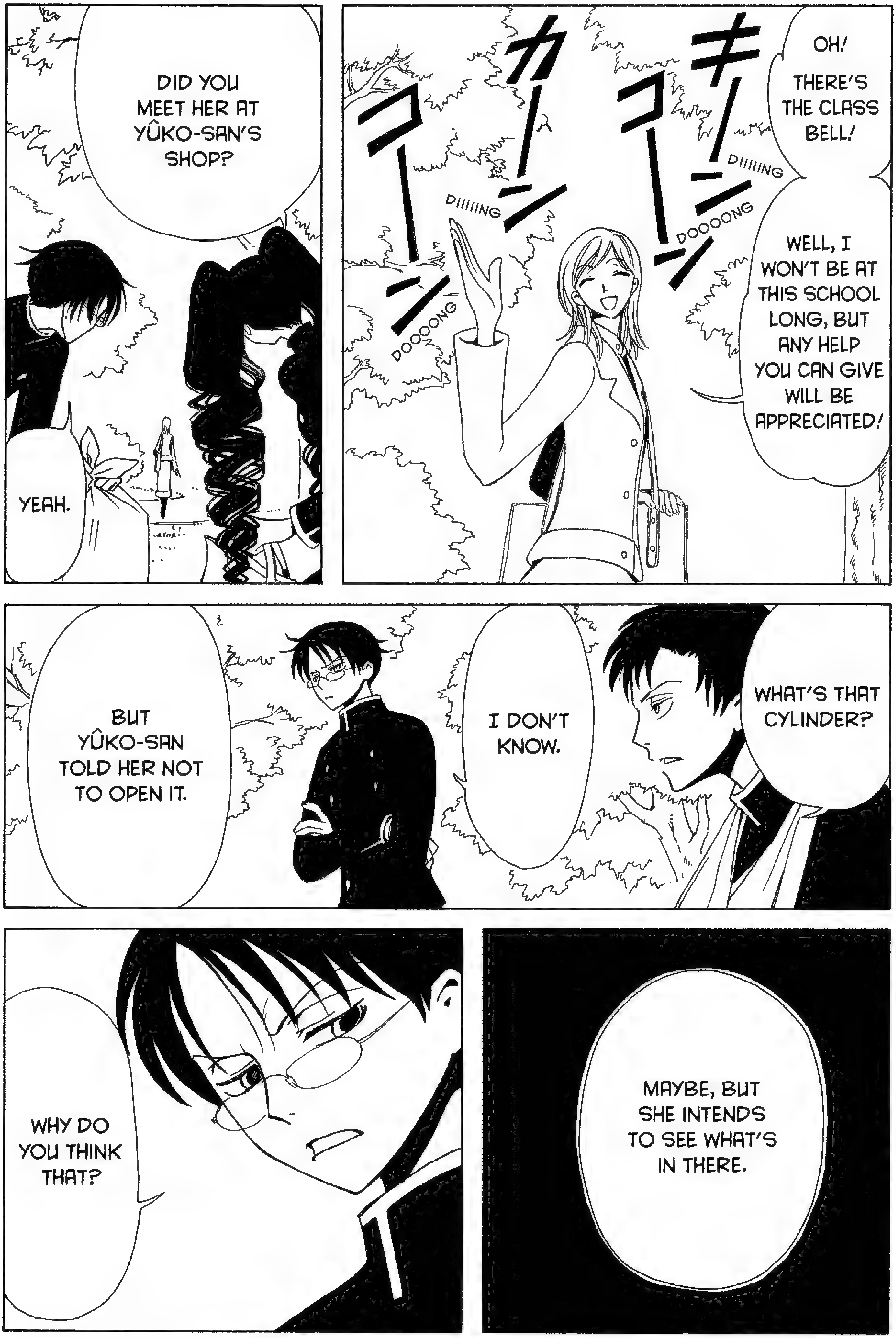
xxxHOLiC
～×××ホリック～

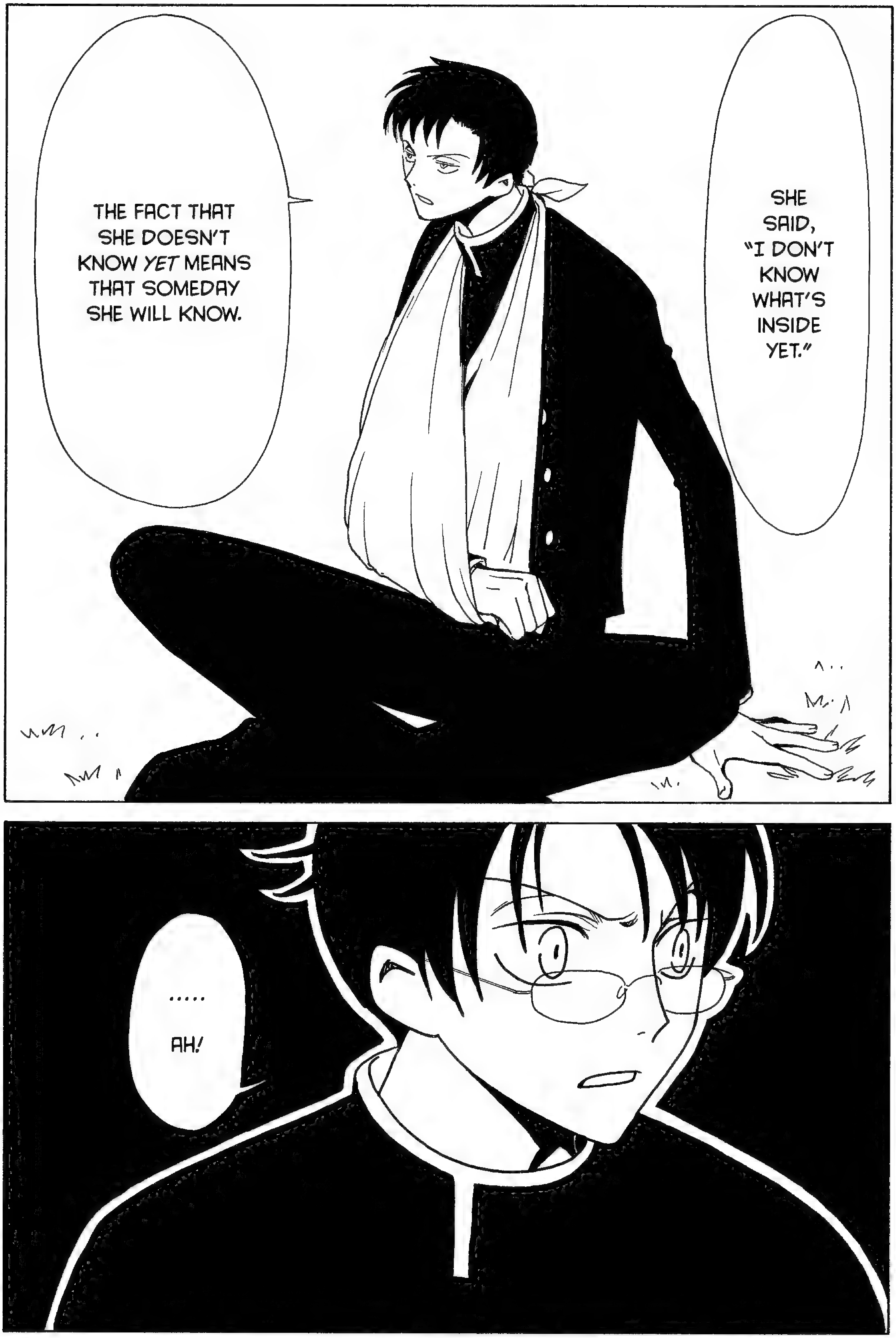

私立十字学園
CROSS PRIVATE
THANKS SO MUCH!
WATANUKI-KUN! DÔMEKI-KUN! AFTER YOU WENT TO THAT SCHOOL...
...THERE WEREN'T ANY MORE REPORTS OF STRANGE THINGS HAPPENING THERE!
YOU BOTH ARE AMAZING!
NAW... WE DIDN'T DO MUCH...
BUT DÔMEKI-KUN, YOU'RE WOUNDED! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SURE.
IT'S YOUR BOWSTRING ARM! THAT'S TERRIBLE!
NO. IT'S NOT SO BAD.
DAMN YOU, DÔMEKI! USING YOUR ELITE ARCHERY CLUB CONNECTIONS TO WRING SYMPATHY OUT OF HIMAWARI-CHAN!
うぬぬ

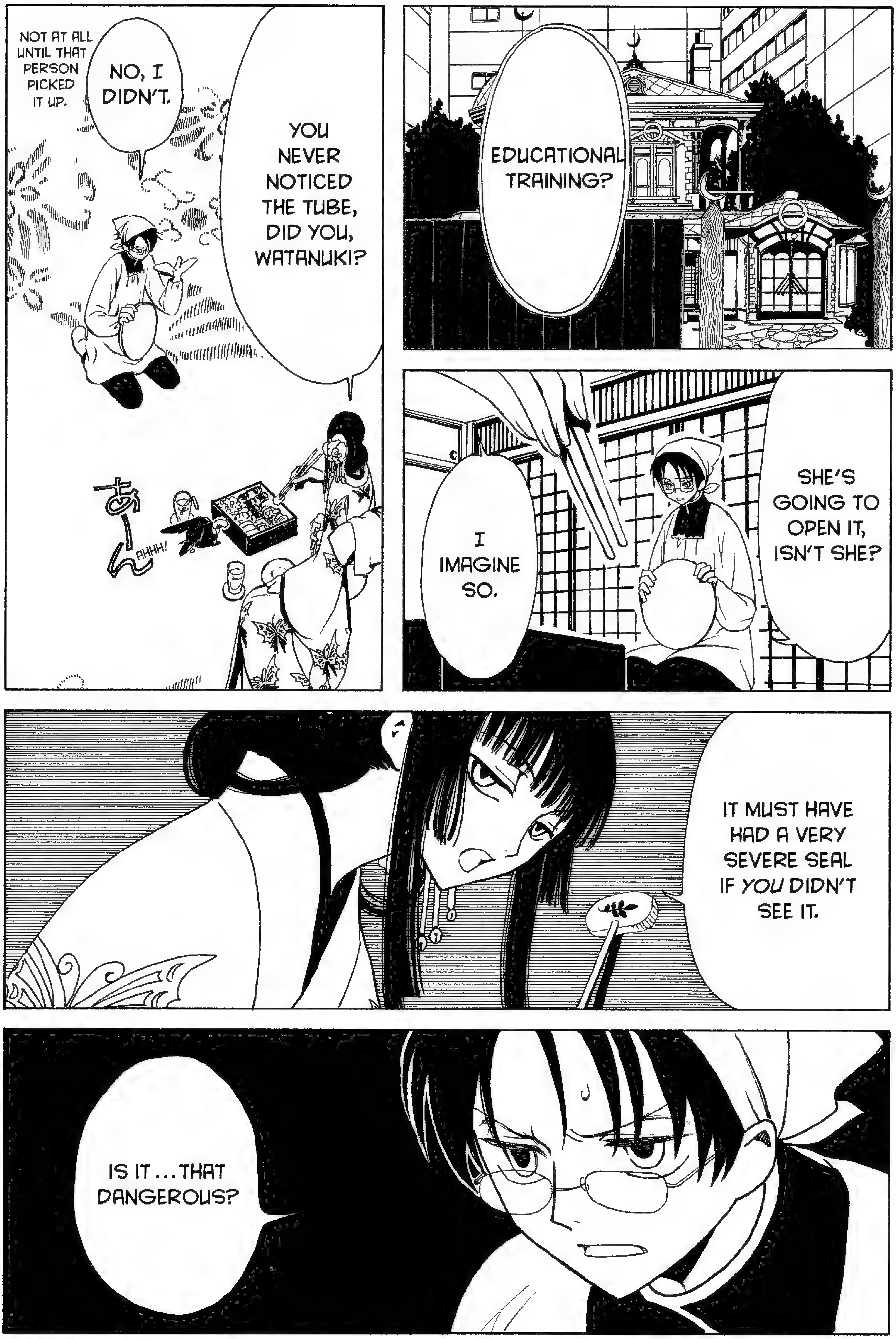

UMM... HERE.
I WANTED TO THANK YOU.
YOU DON'T MIND SWEETS, DO YOU?
やっほーい
I LIKE SWEET! I LIKE SOUR!
YA-HOOOOOOOO
THIS IS GREAT!
HIMAWARI-CHAN, YOU NEVER LET ME DOWN!
YOU'RE A PRETTY GOOD BAKER!
むぐむぐ
MUNCH MUNCH
I BOUGHT THEM.
AT A BAKERY NEAR MY HOUSE.
あう
UUUH
I MEAN... THEN... YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO *CHOOSE* THE BEST STUFF!
IT REALLY IS GOOD.
がさ
SHFF
OH! IT'S YOU!

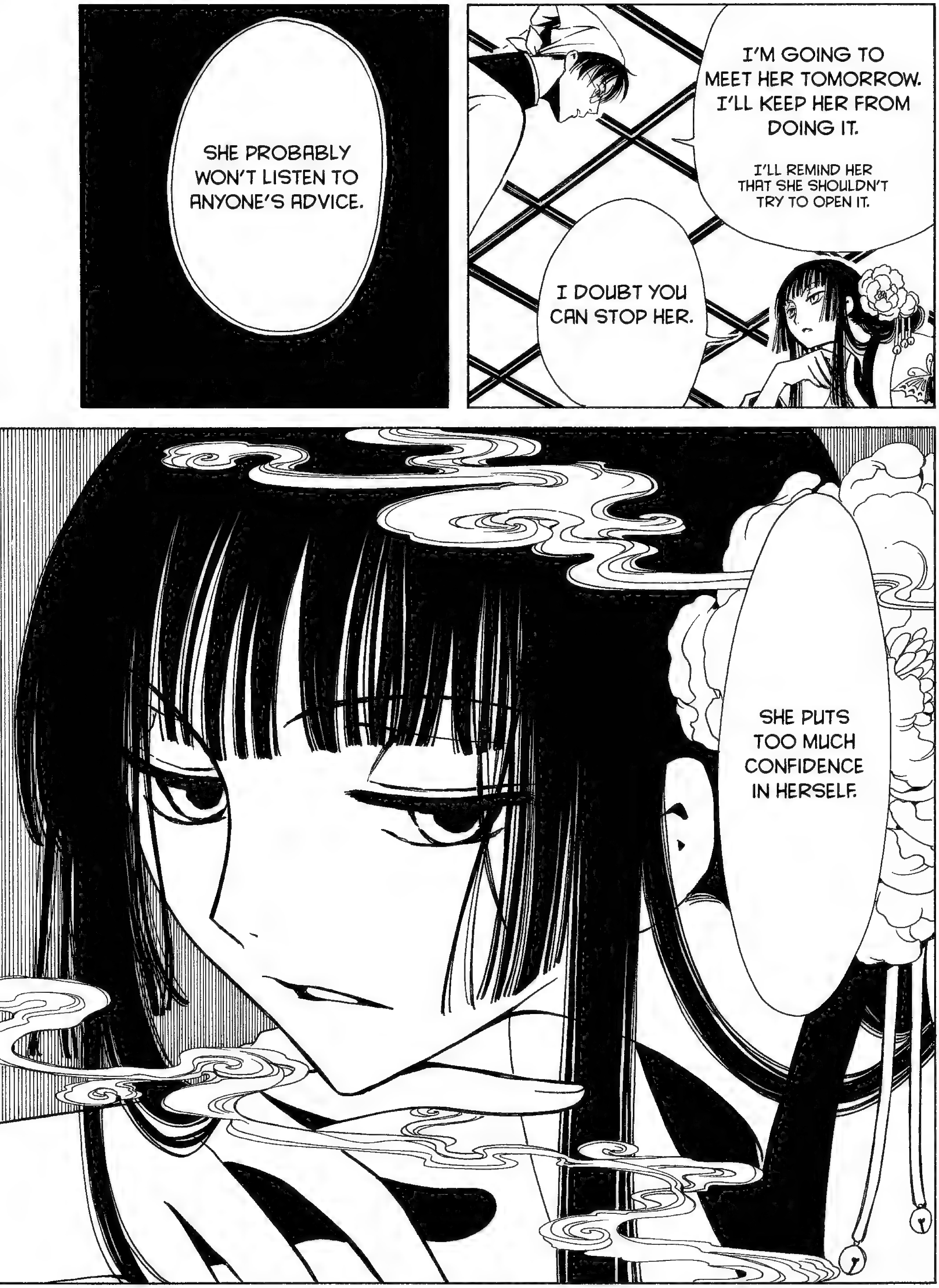

YOU WORK AT THAT SHOP, DON'T YOU?
AH! YES.
AND YOU'RE A STUDENT HERE?
I'LL BE WORKING HERE STARTING TOMORROW.
EDUCATIONAL TRAINING.
REALLY?
ISN'T FATE AN ODD THING?

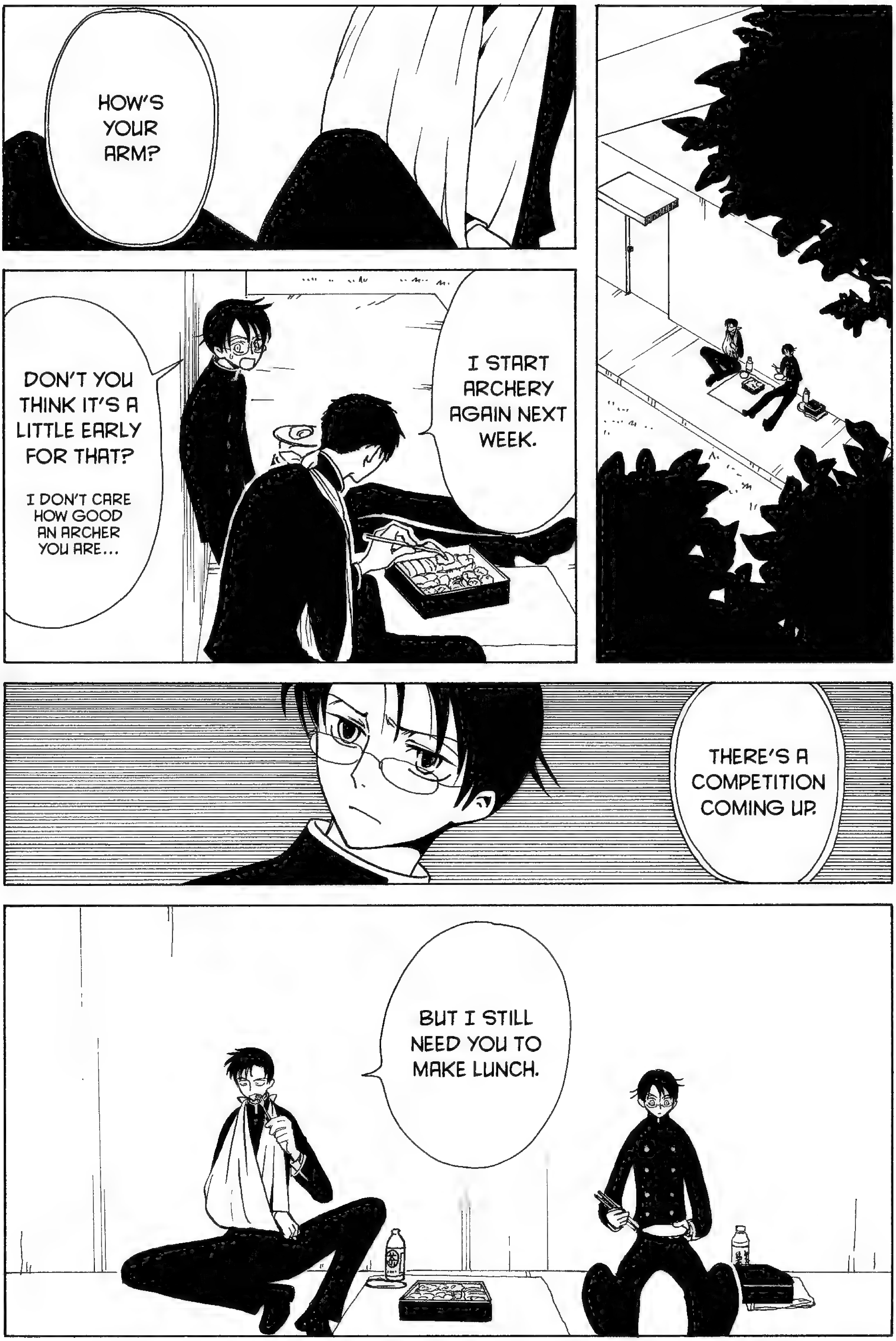

THIS HAPPENS A LOT TO ME. THEY SAY I'VE GOT STRONG LUCK.
WHEN I THINK SOMETHING WILL GO A PARTICULAR WAY, IT ALWAYS DOES. WHEN I WANT SOMETHING, I ALWAYS GET IT.
THAT'S FANTASTIC!
SHNK
THIS, TOO!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S INSIDE YET, BUT I KNOW IT'S SOMETHING PERFECT FOR ME!

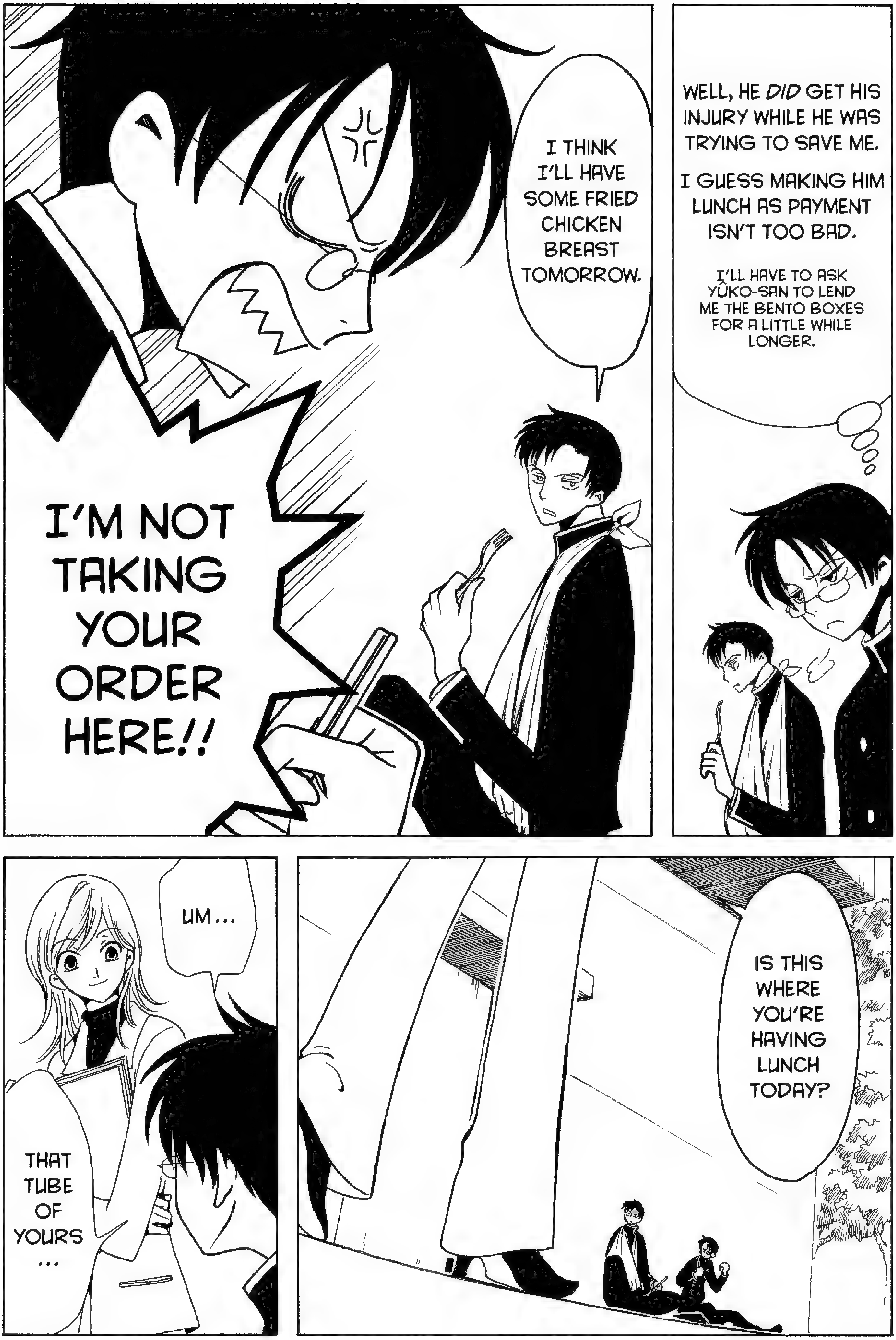

OH!
THERE'S THE CLASS BELL!
キーンコーン
DIIIING DOOOONG
カーンコーン
DIIIING DOOOONG
WELL, I WON'T BE AT THIS SCHOOL LONG, BUT ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE WILL BE APPRECIATED!
DID YOU MEET HER AT YÛKO-SAN'S SHOP?
YEAH.
WHAT'S THAT CYLINDER?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT YÛKO-SAN TOLD HER NOT TO OPEN IT.
MAYBE, BUT SHE INTENDS TO SEE WHAT'S IN THERE.
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?

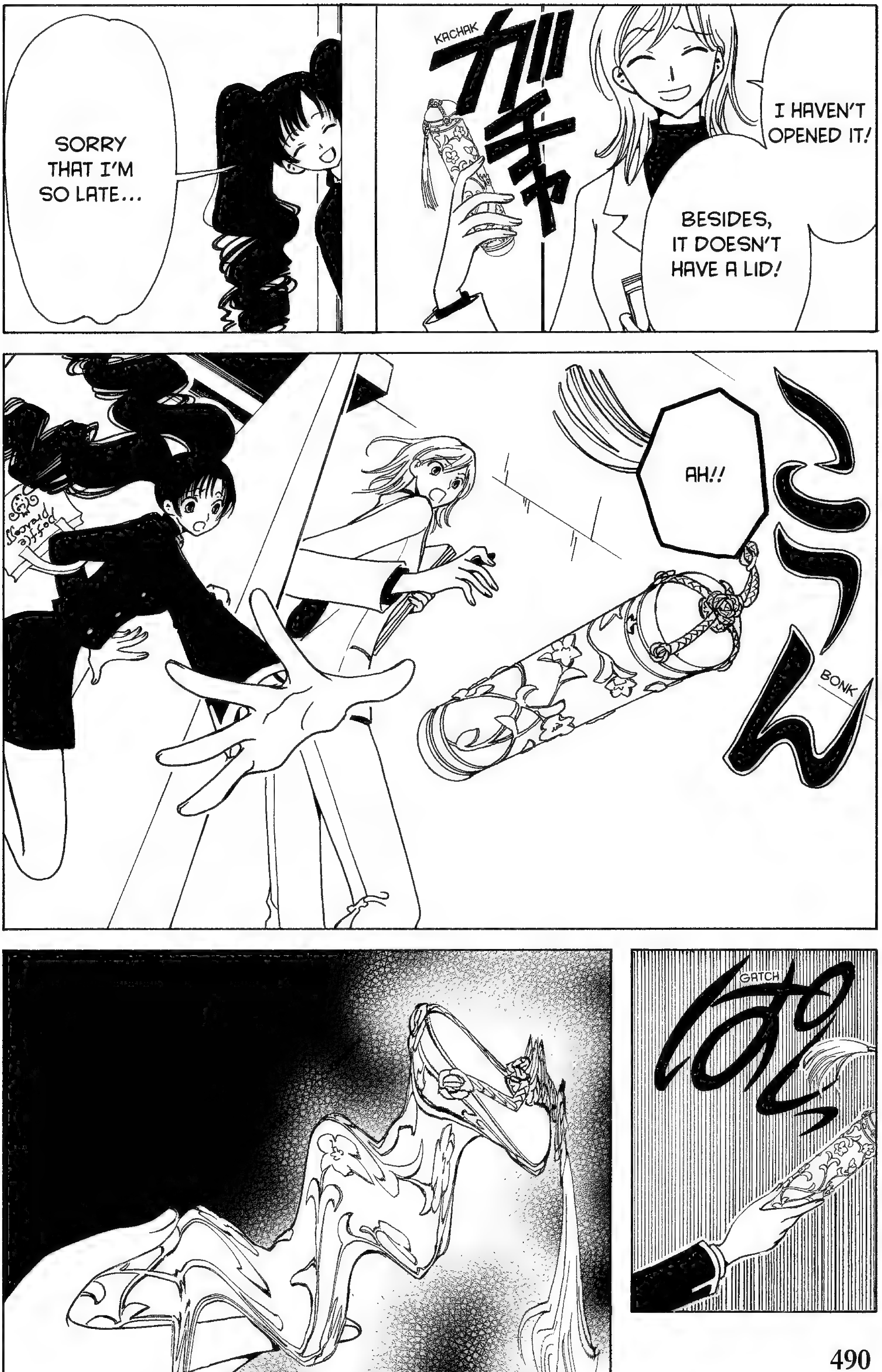

SHE SAID, "I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S INSIDE YET."
THE FACT THAT SHE DOESN'T KNOW *YET* MEANS THAT SOMEDAY SHE WILL KNOW.
..... AH!

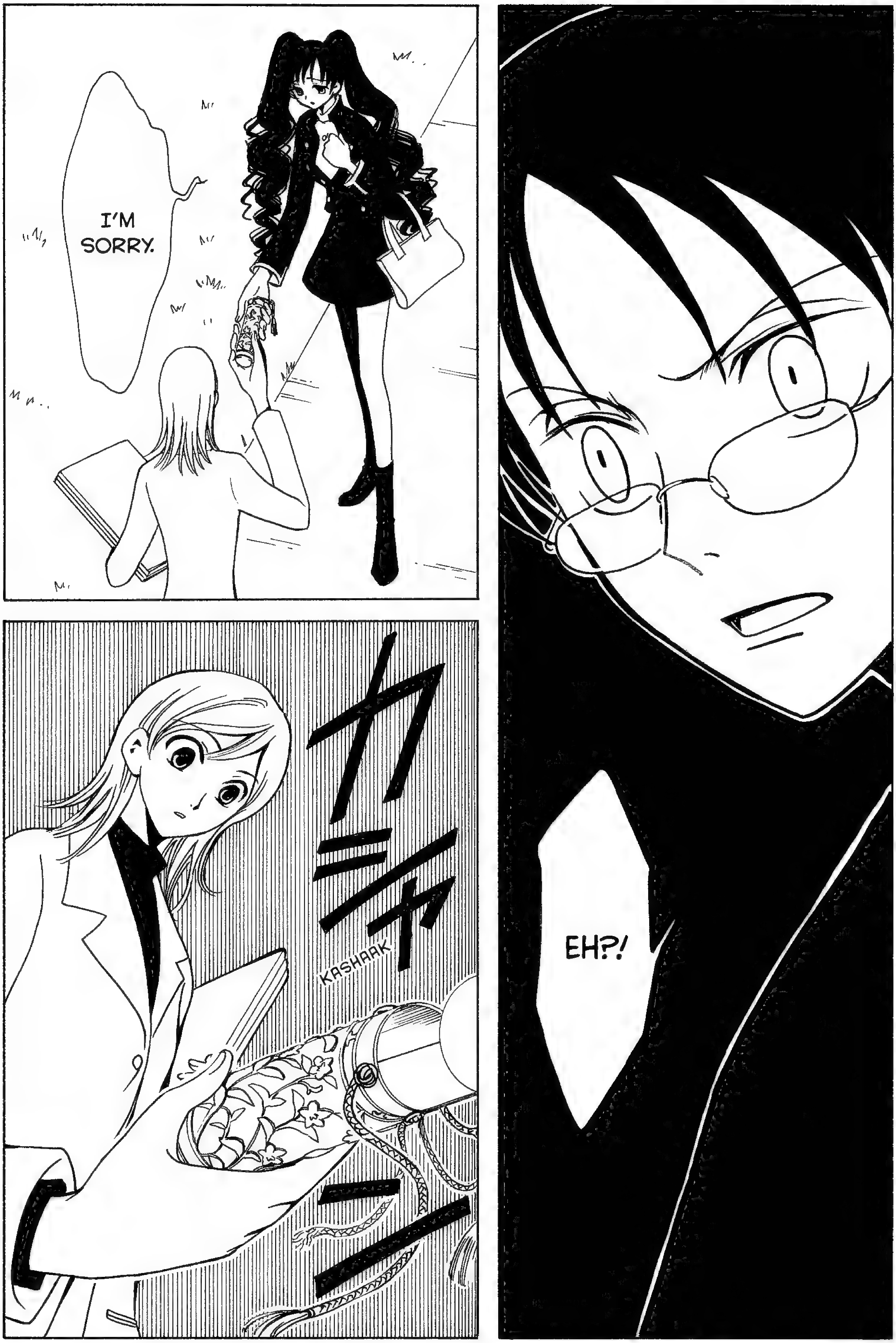

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING?
SHE'S GOING TO OPEN IT, ISN'T SHE?
I IMAGINE SO.
YOU NEVER NOTICED THE TUBE, DID YOU, WATANUKI?
NO, I DIDN'T.
NOT AT ALL UNTIL THAT PERSON PICKED IT UP.
あーん
AHHH!
IT MUST HAVE HAD A VERY SEVERE SEAL IF *YOU* DIDN'T SEE IT.
IS IT... THAT DANGEROUS?

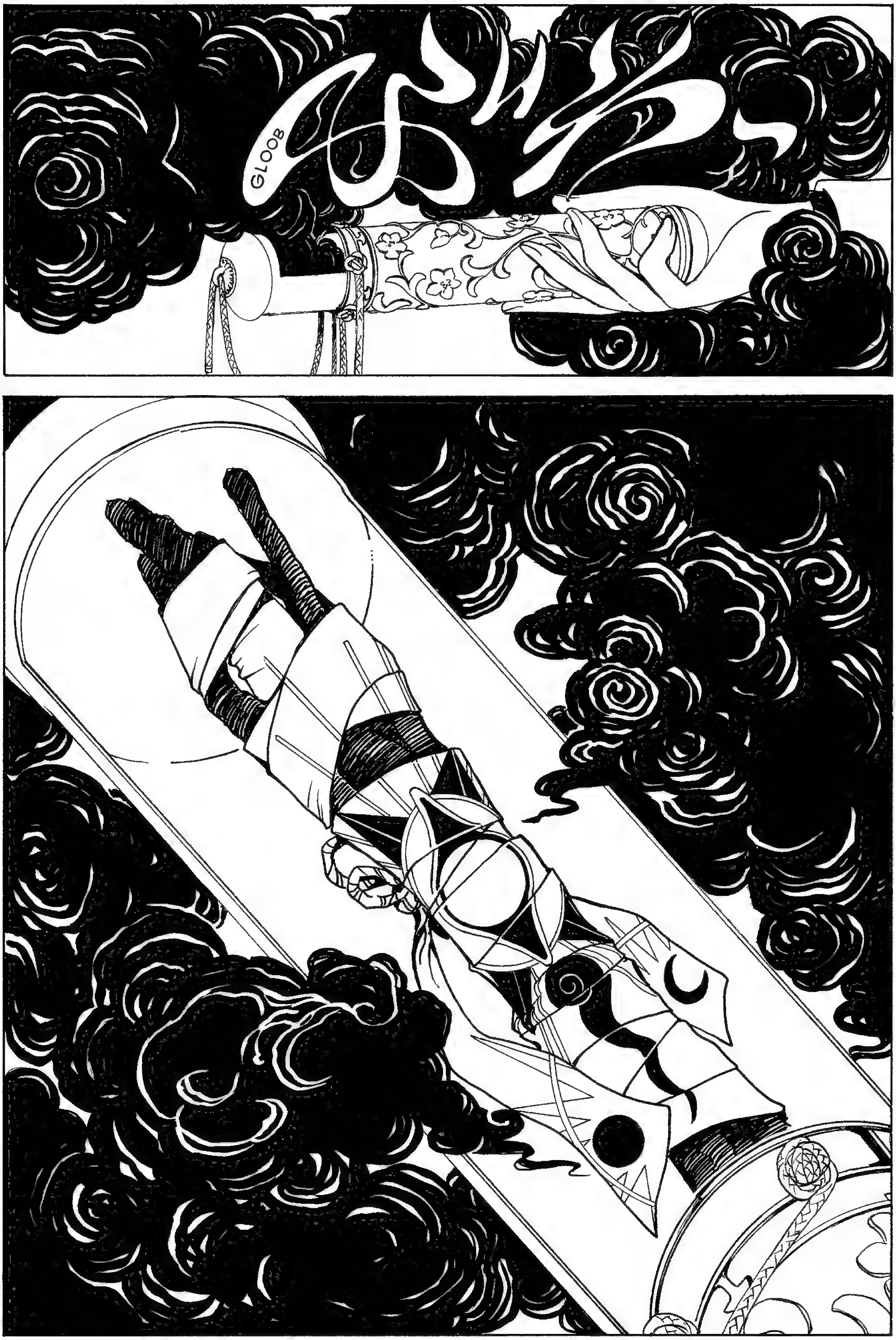

I'M GOING TO MEET HER TOMORROW. I'LL KEEP HER FROM DOING IT.
I'LL REMIND HER THAT SHE SHOULDN'T TRY TO OPEN IT.
I DOUBT YOU CAN STOP HER.
SHE PROBABLY WON'T LISTEN TO ANYONE'S ADVICE.
SHE PUTS TOO MUCH CONFIDENCE IN HERSELF.

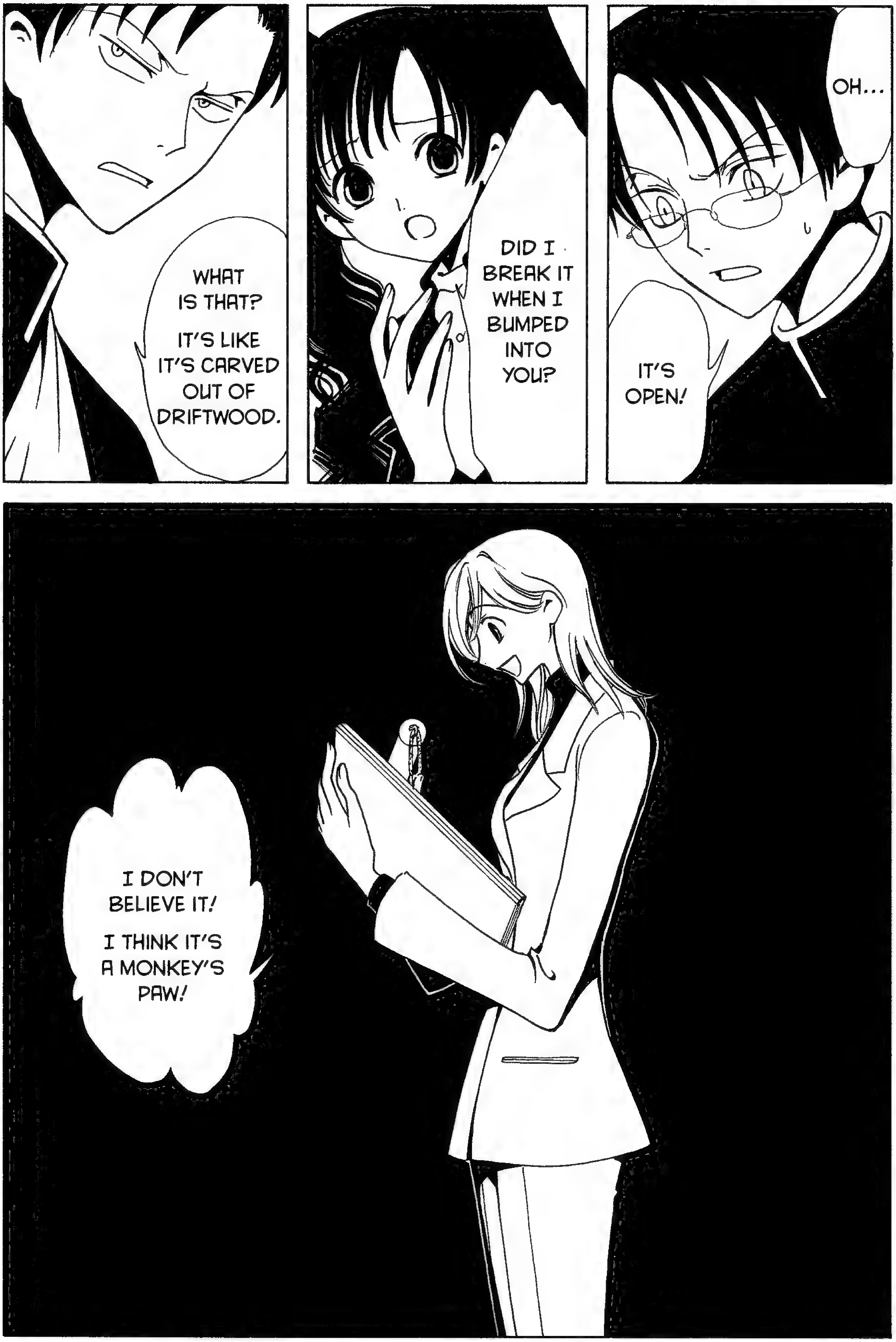

HOW'S YOUR ARM?
I START ARCHERY AGAIN NEXT WEEK.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S A LITTLE EARLY FOR THAT? I DON'T CARE HOW GOOD AN ARCHER YOU ARE...
THERE'S A COMPETITION COMING UP.
BUT I STILL NEED YOU TO MAKE LUNCH.

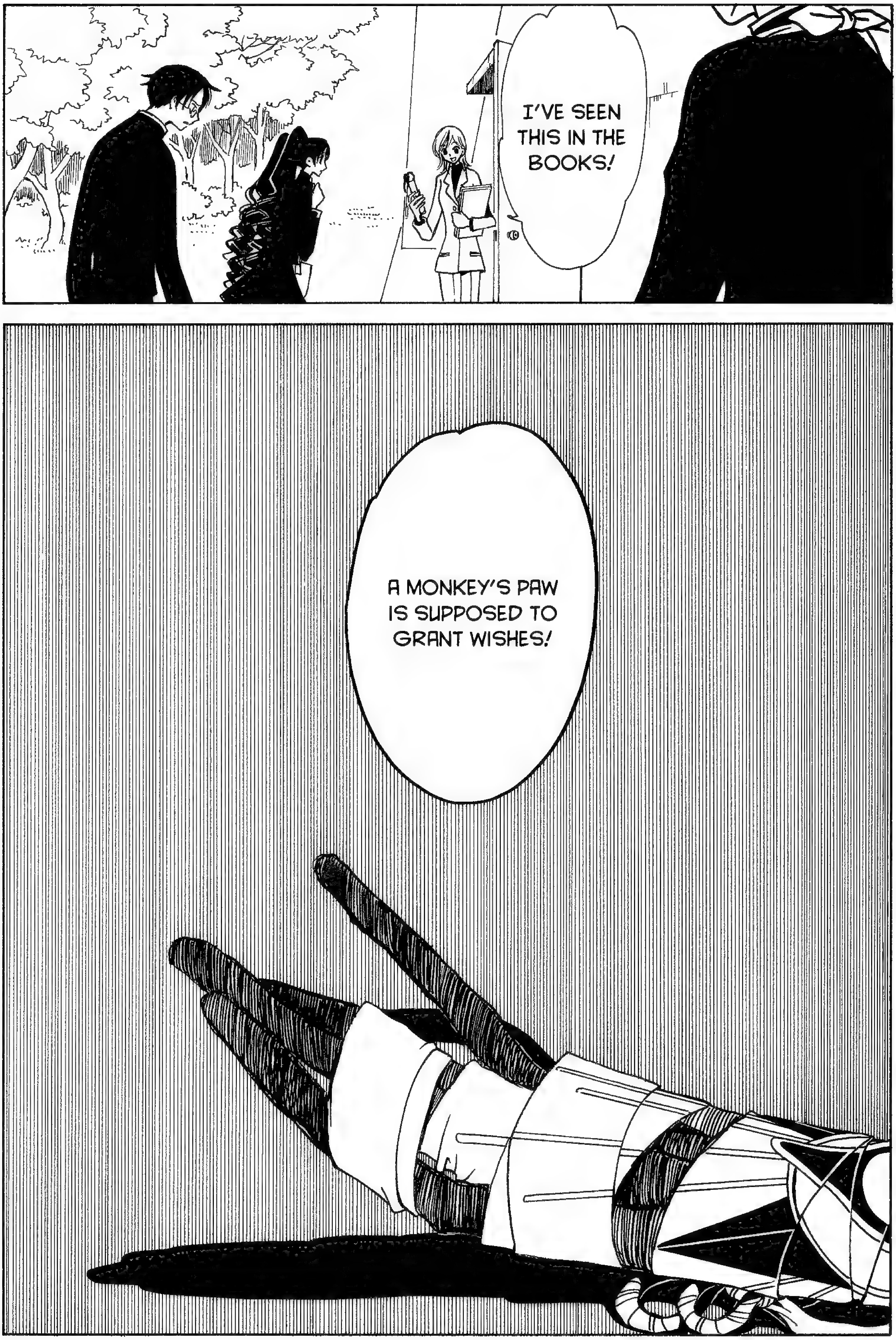

WELL, HE *DID* GET HIS INJURY WHILE HE WAS TRYING TO SAVE ME.
I GUESS MAKING HIM LUNCH AS PAYMENT ISN'T TOO BAD.
I'LL HAVE TO ASK YŪKO-SAN TO LEND ME THE BENTO BOXES FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.
I THINK I'LL HAVE SOME FRIED CHICKEN BREAST TOMORROW.
I'M NOT TAKING YOUR ORDER HERE!!
IS THIS WHERE YOU'RE HAVING LUNCH TODAY?
UM...
THAT TUBE OF YOURS...

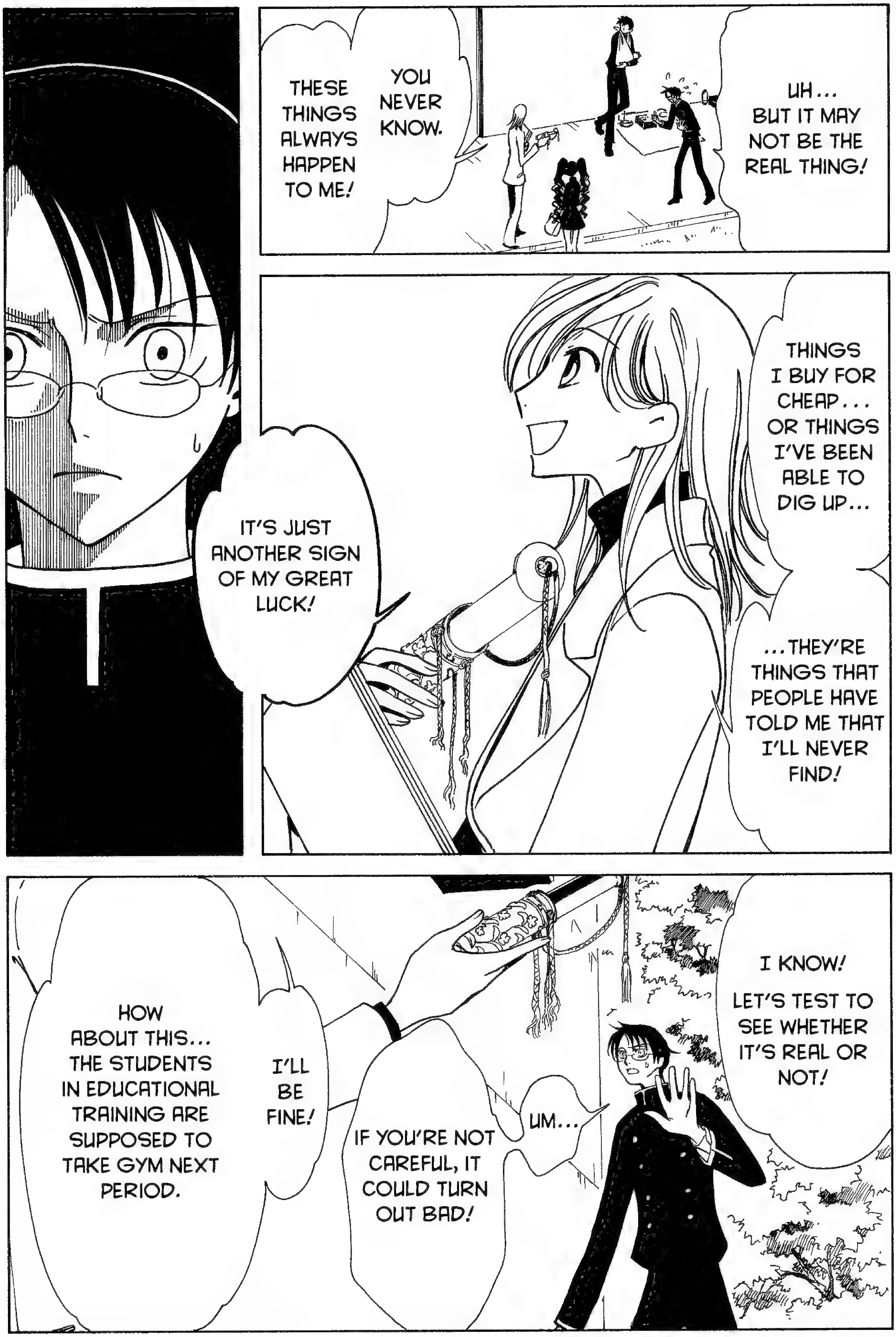

KACHAK
ガチャ
I HAVEN'T OPENED IT!
BESIDES, IT DOESN'T HAVE A LID!
SORRY THAT I'M SO LATE...
AH!!
こうん
BONK
ぱし
GATCH


EH?!
I'M SORRY.
カシャン
KASHAAK

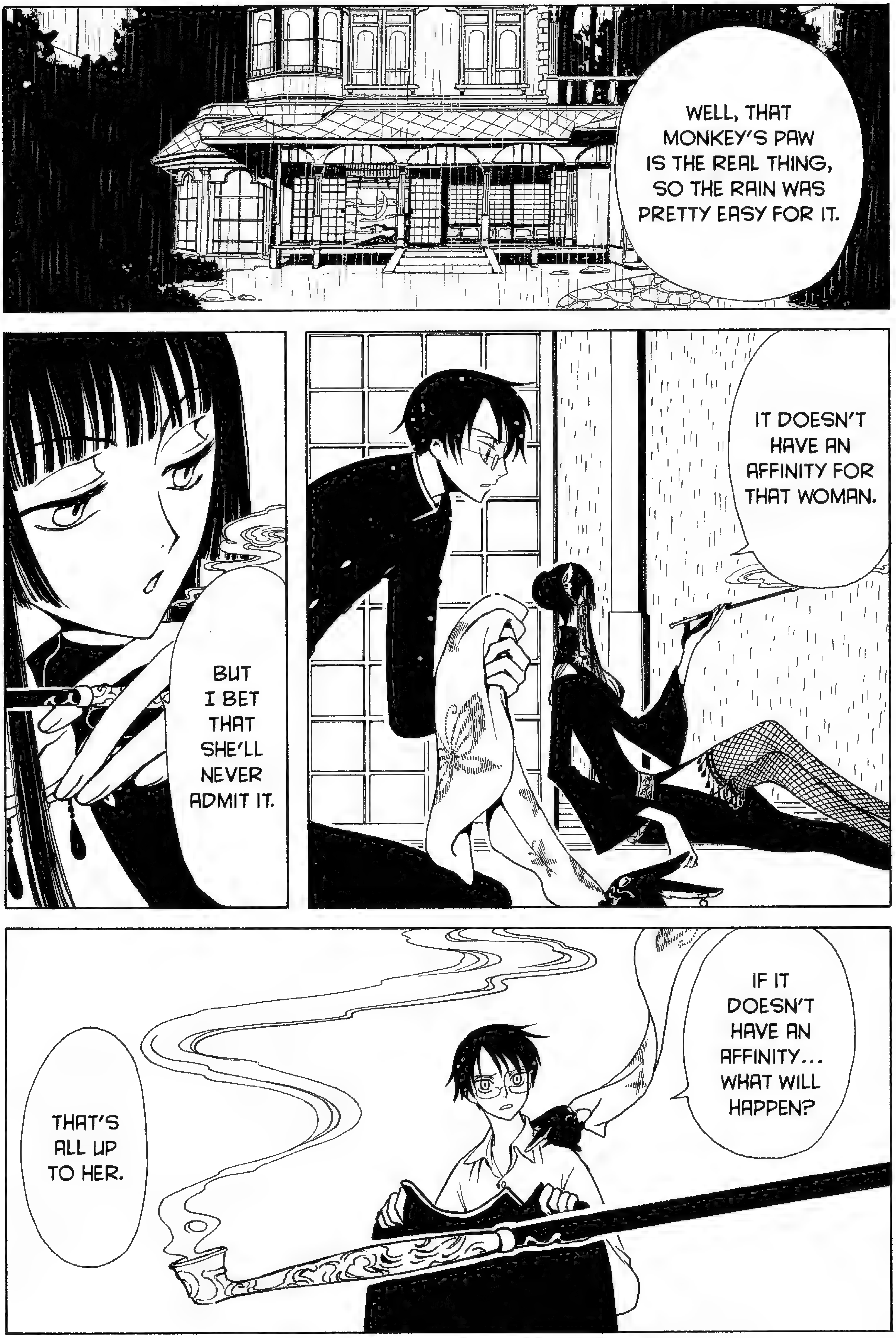

ぶわっ
GLOOB

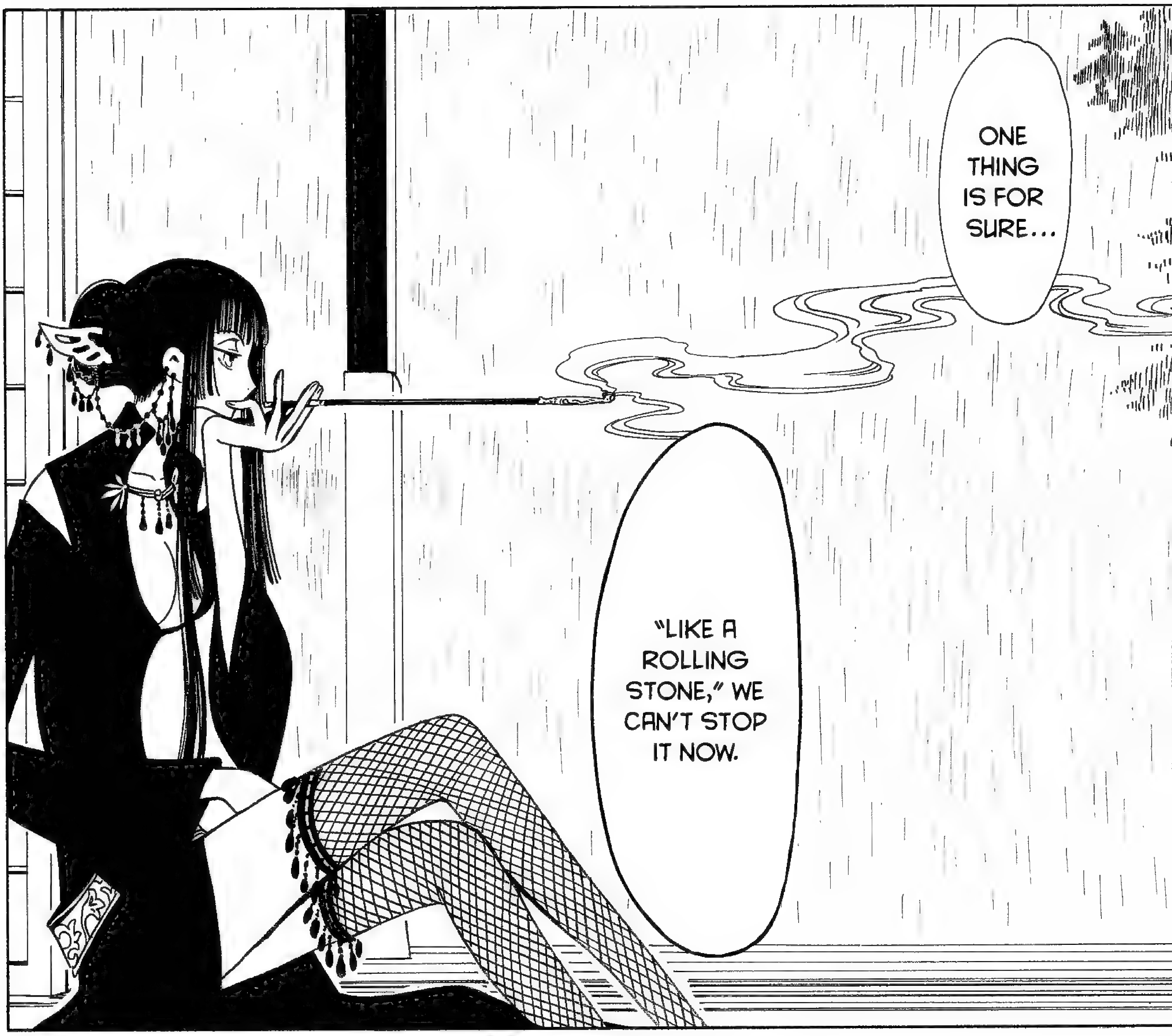

OH...
IT'S OPEN!
DID I BREAK IT WHEN I BUMPED INTO YOU?
WHAT IS THAT? IT'S LIKE IT'S CARVED OUT OF DRIFTWOOD.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! I THINK IT'S A MONKEY'S PAW!

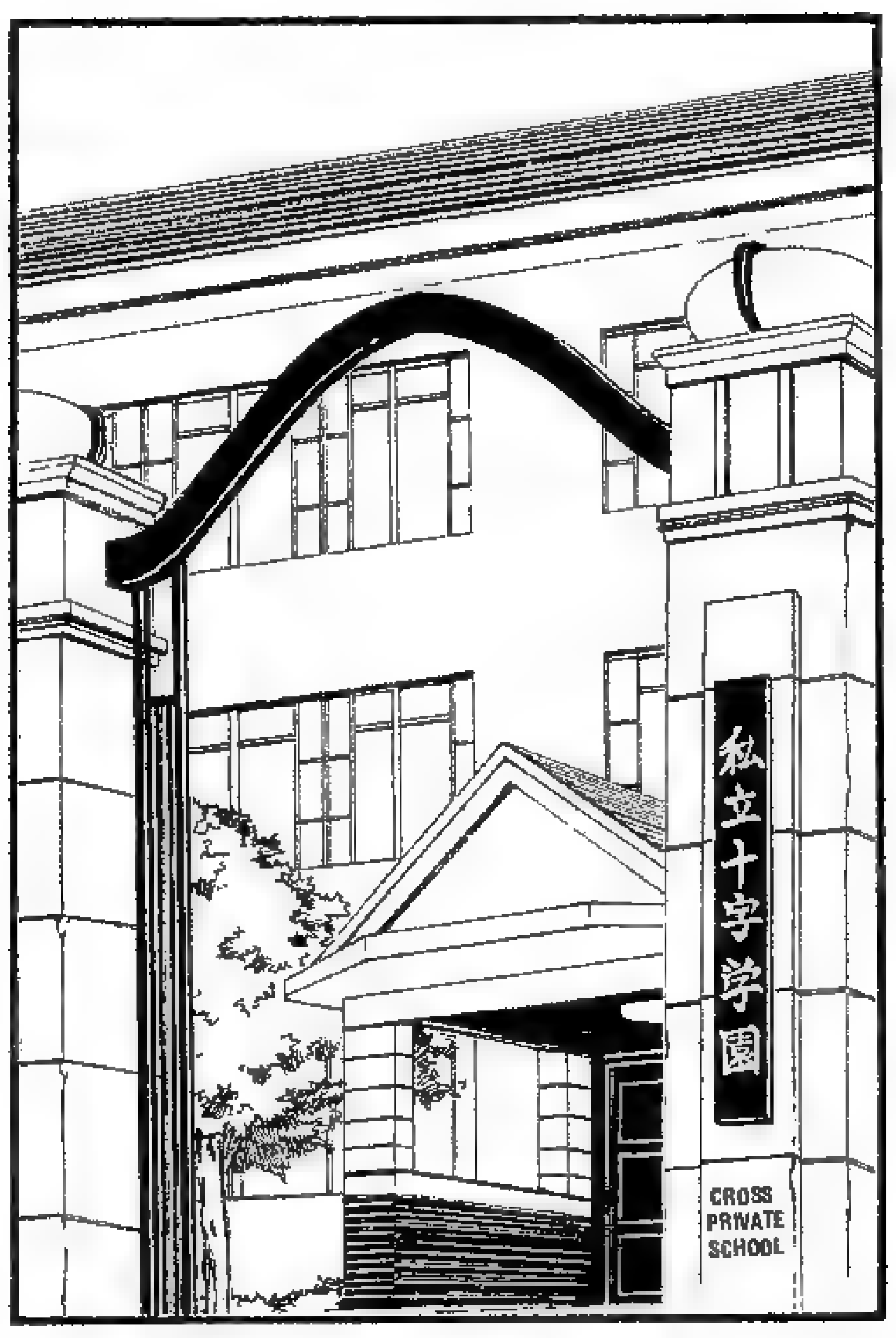

I'VE SEEN THIS IN THE BOOKS!
A MONKEY'S PAW IS SUPPOSED TO GRANT WISHES!

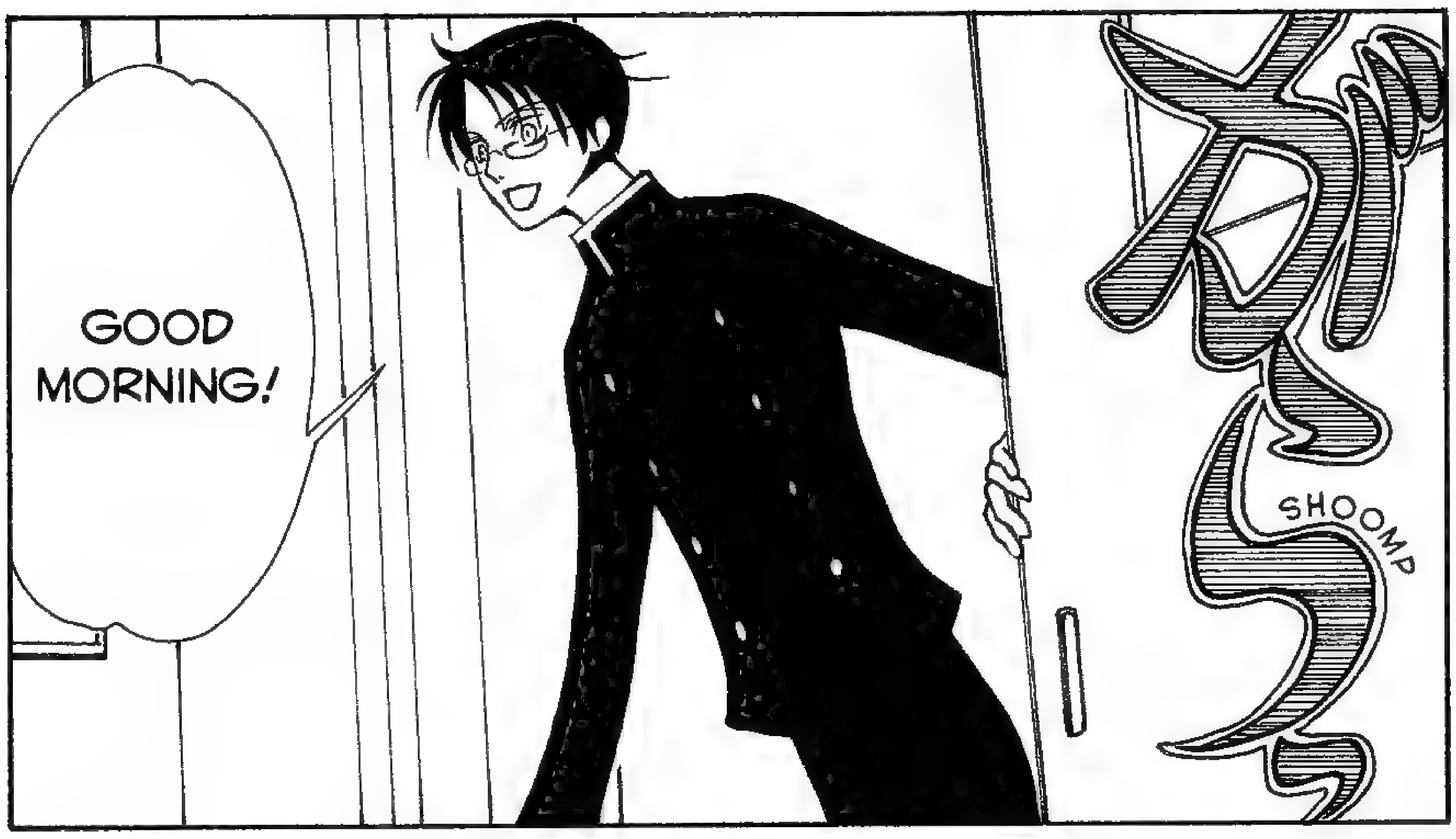

UH... BUT IT MAY NOT BE THE REAL THING!
YOU NEVER KNOW.
THESE THINGS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME!
THINGS I BUY FOR CHEAP... OR THINGS I'VE BEEN ABLE TO DIG UP...
...THEY'RE THINGS THAT PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME THAT I'LL NEVER FIND!
IT'S JUST ANOTHER SIGN OF MY GREAT LUCK!
I KNOW! LET'S TEST TO SEE WHETHER IT'S REAL OR NOT!
UM...
IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, IT COULD TURN OUT BAD!
I'LL BE FINE!
HOW ABOUT THIS... THE STUDENTS IN EDUCATIONAL TRAINING ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE GYM NEXT PERIOD.

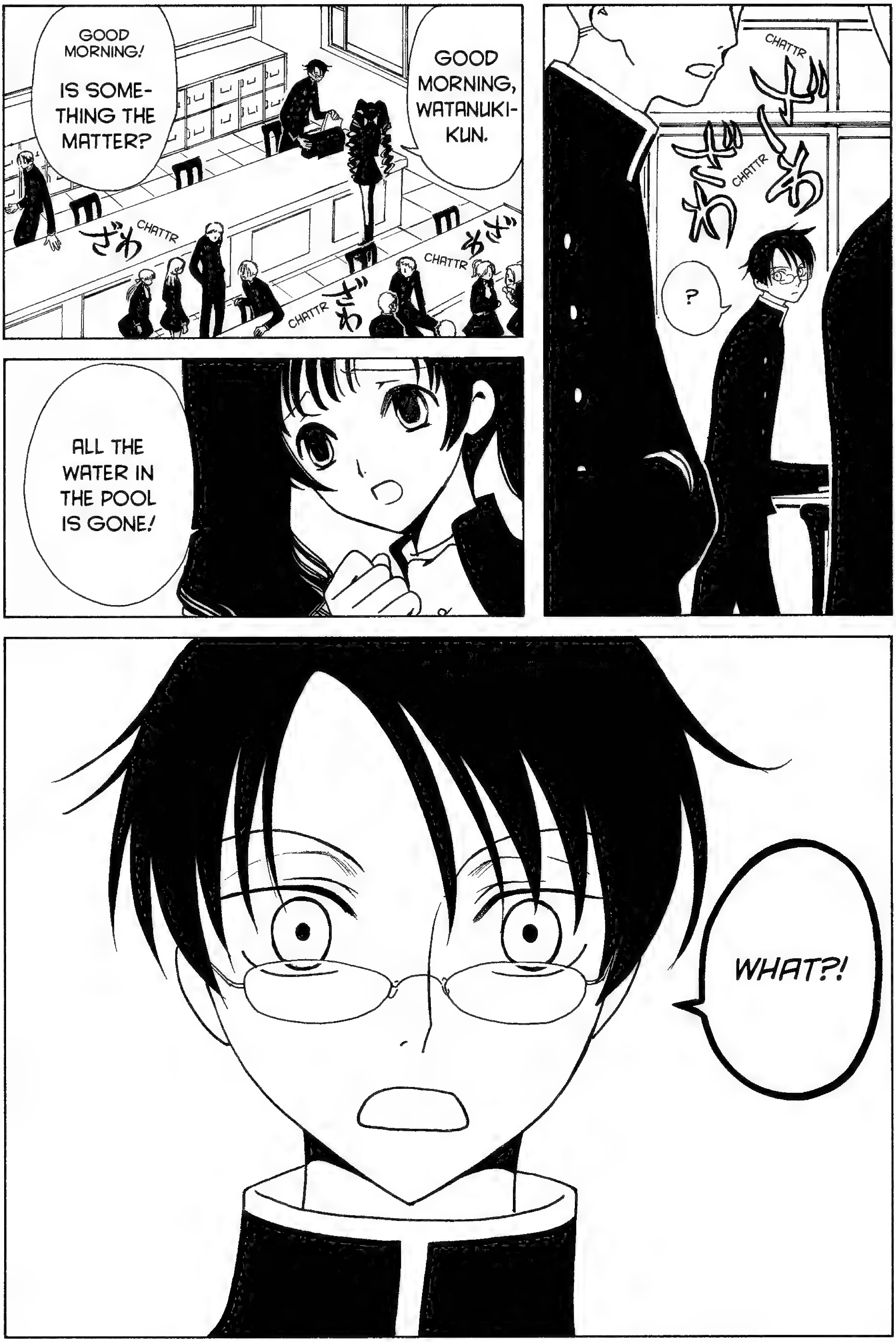
SO HERE'S MY WISH.
I WISH THAT IT WOULD RAIN FROM NOW UNTIL TONIGHT!
PAKIK
...AND THUS, THE RAIN.

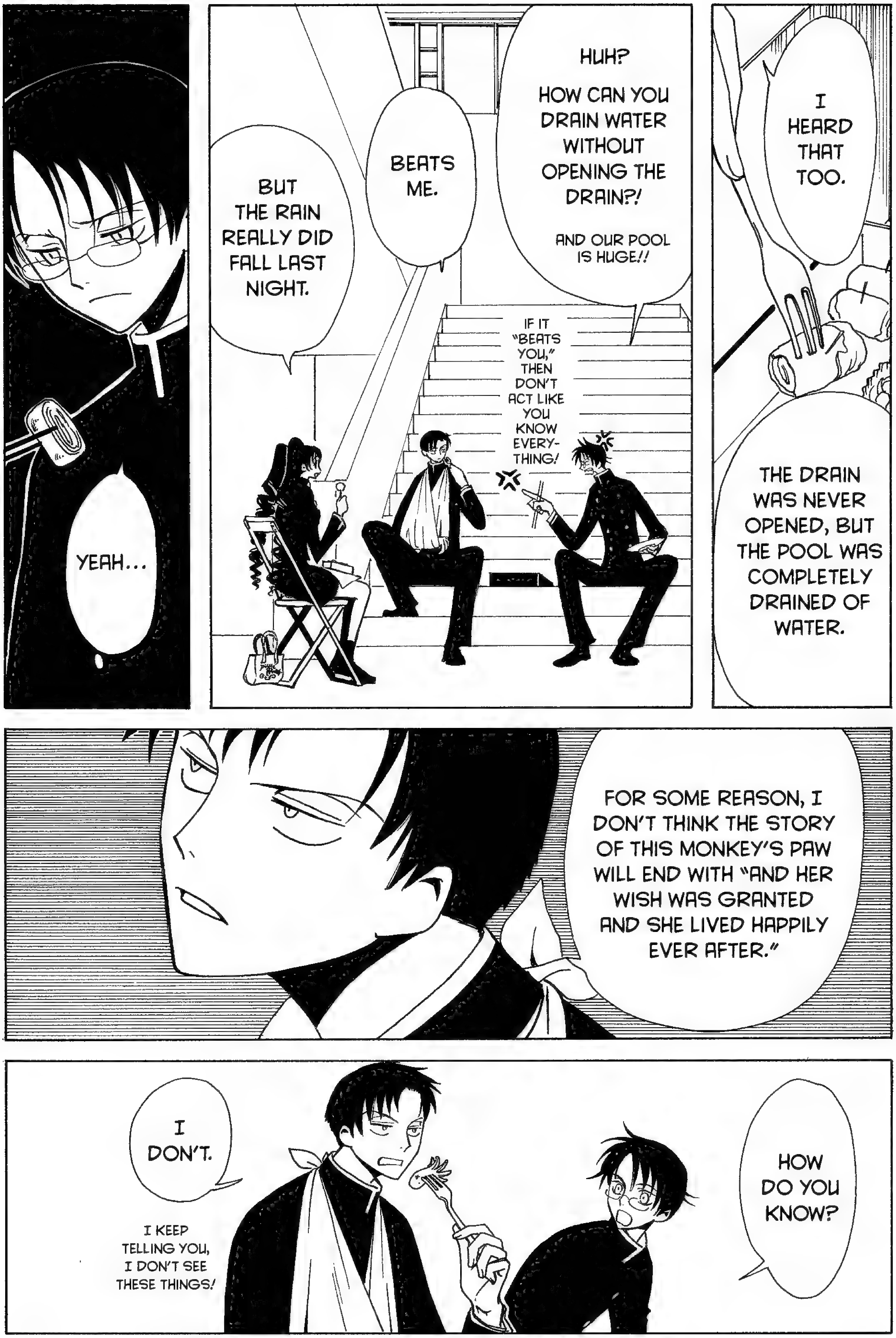

WELL, THAT MONKEY'S PAW IS THE REAL THING, SO THE RAIN WAS PRETTY EASY FOR IT.
IT DOESN'T HAVE AN AFFINITY FOR THAT WOMAN.
BUT I BET THAT SHE'LL NEVER ADMIT IT.
IF IT DOESN'T HAVE AN AFFINITY… WHAT WILL HAPPEN?
THAT'S ALL UP TO HER.

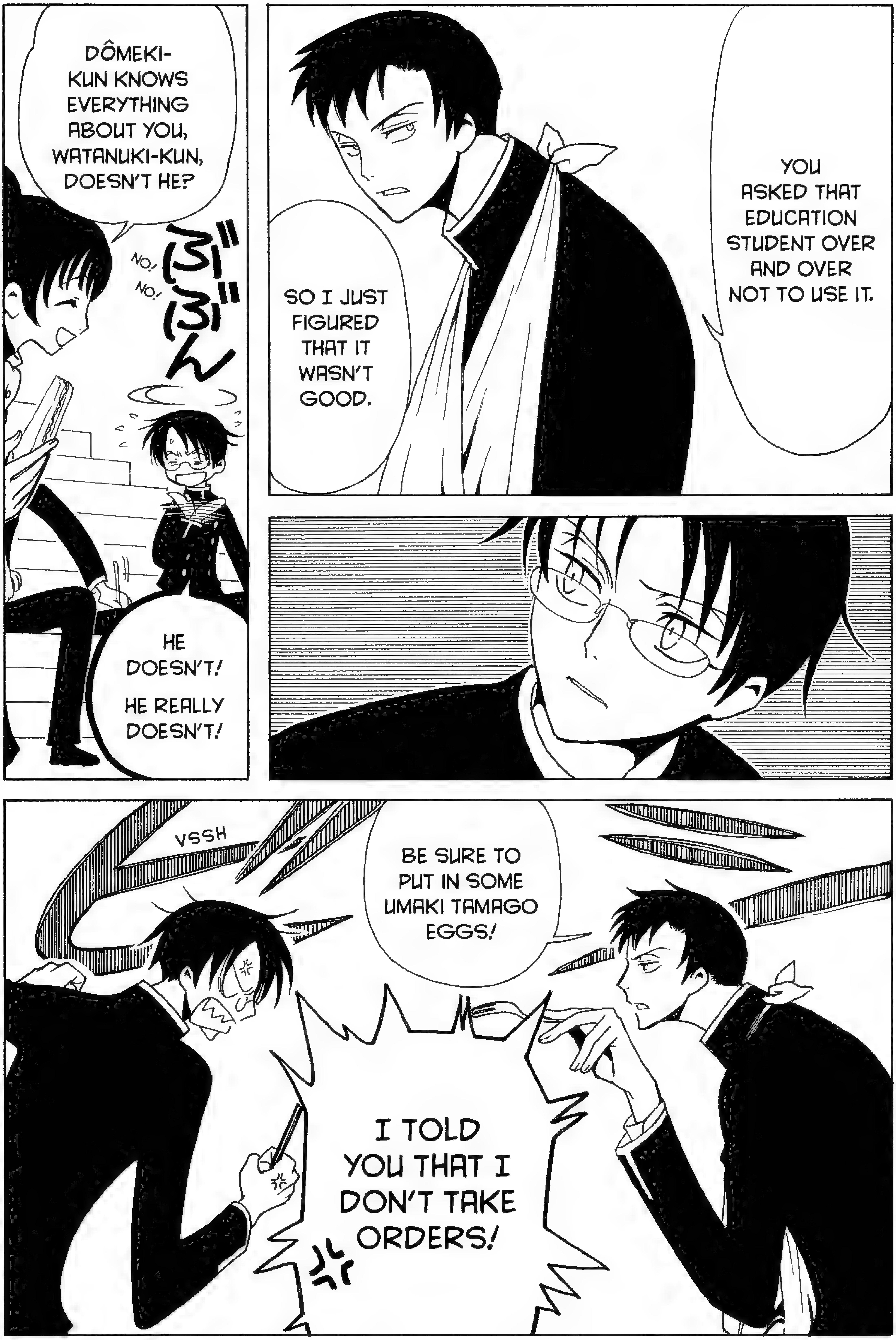

ONE THING IS FOR SURE…
"LIKE A ROLLING STONE," WE CAN'T STOP IT NOW.


私立十字学園
CROSS PRIVATE SCHOOL

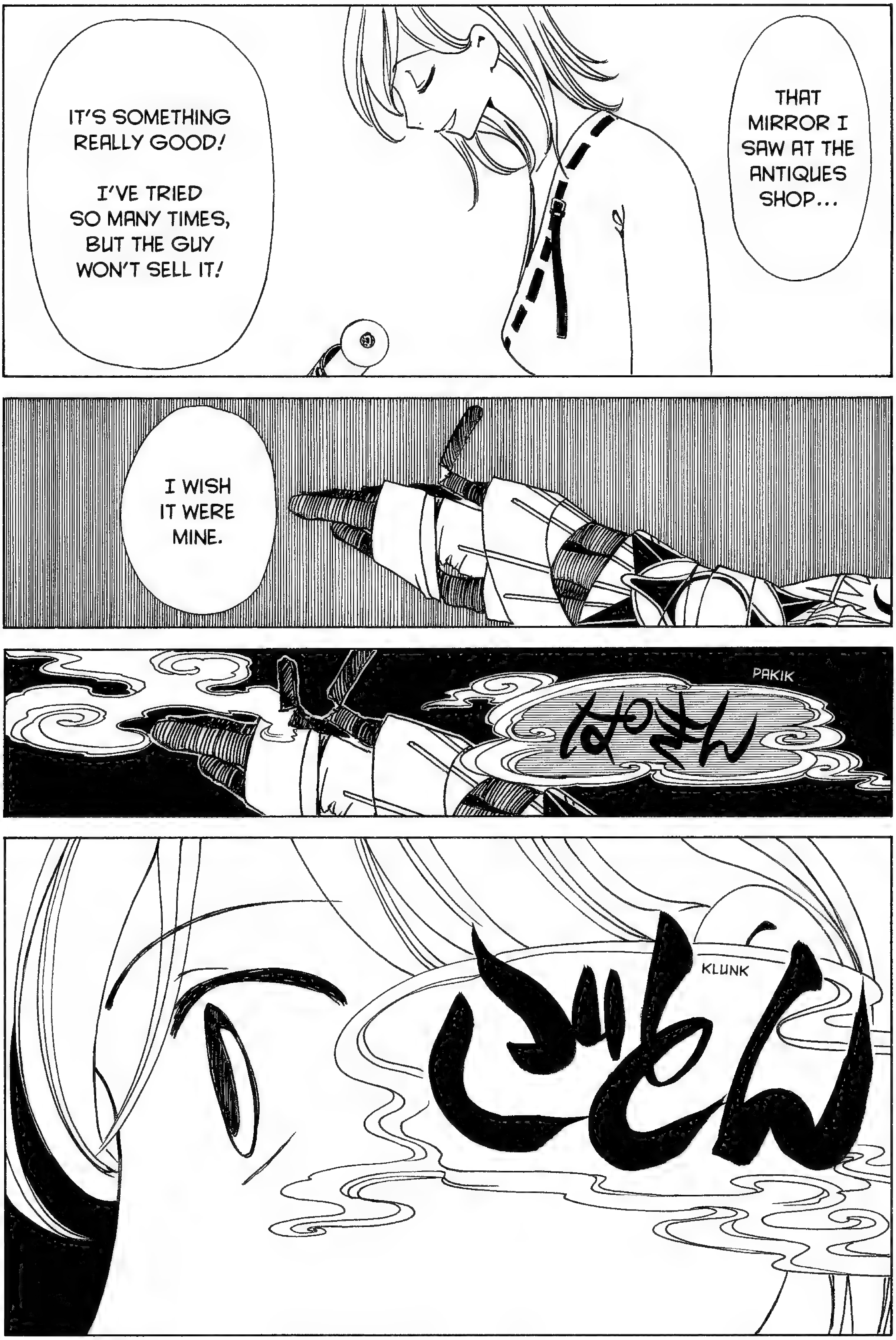

SHOOMP
GOOD MORNING!


CHATTR
ざわ
CHATTR
ざわ
?
GOOD MORNING, WATANUKI-KUN.
GOOD MORNING! IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
ざわ
CHATTR
ざわ
CHATTR
ざわ
CHATTR
ALL THE WATER IN THE POOL IS GONE!
WHAT?!

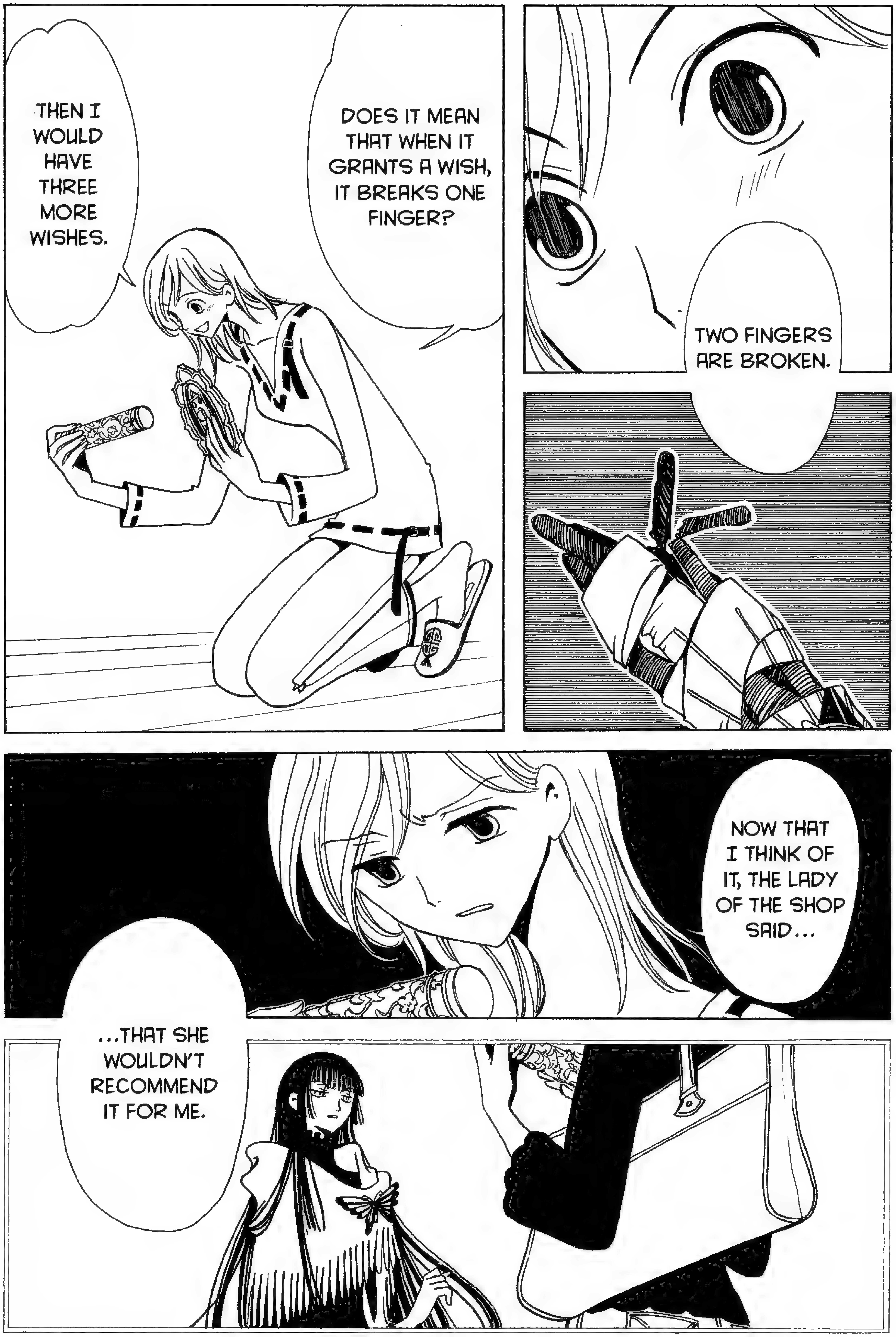

I HEARD THAT TOO.
THE DRAIN WAS NEVER OPENED, BUT THE POOL WAS COMPLETELY DRAINED OF WATER.
HUH? HOW CAN YOU DRAIN WATER WITHOUT OPENING THE DRAIN?!
AND OUR POOL IS HUGE!!
BEATS ME.
IF IT "BEATS YOU," THEN DON'T ACT LIKE YOU KNOW EVERYTHING!
BUT THE RAIN REALLY DID FALL LAST NIGHT.
YEAH...
FOR SOME REASON, I DON'T THINK THE STORY OF THIS MONKEY'S PAW WILL END WITH "AND HER WISH WAS GRANTED AND SHE LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER."
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I DON'T.
I KEEP TELLING YOU, I DON'T SEE THESE THINGS!

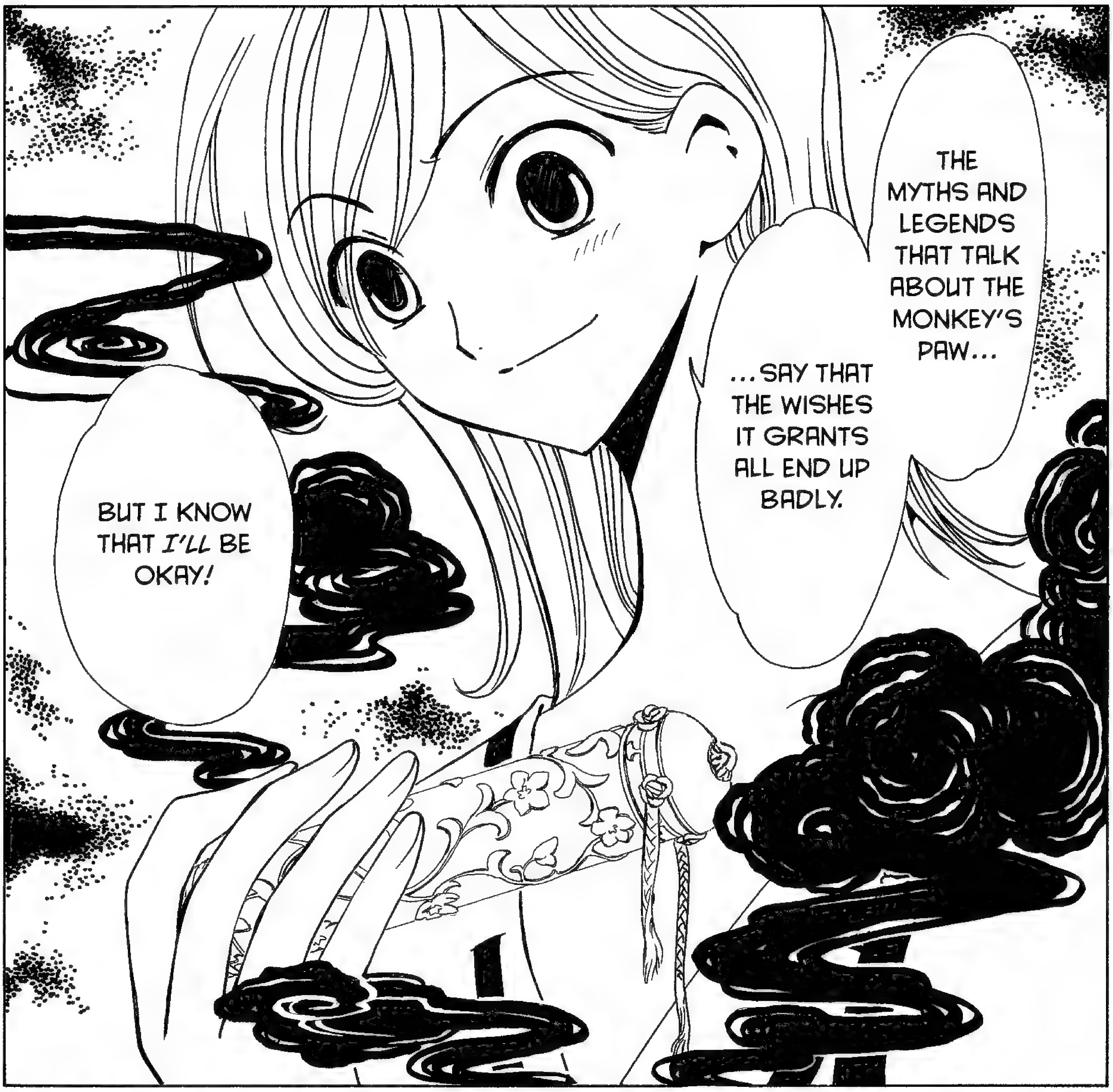

YOU ASKED THAT EDUCATION STUDENT OVER AND OVER NOT TO USE IT.
SO I JUST FIGURED THAT IT WASN'T GOOD.
DÔMEKI-KUN KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, WATANUKI-KUN, DOESN'T HE?
ぶんぶん
NO! NO!
HE DOESN'T! HE REALLY DOESN'T!
VSSH
BE SURE TO PUT IN SOME UMAKI TAMAGO EGGS!
I TOLD YOU THAT I DON'T TAKE ORDERS!

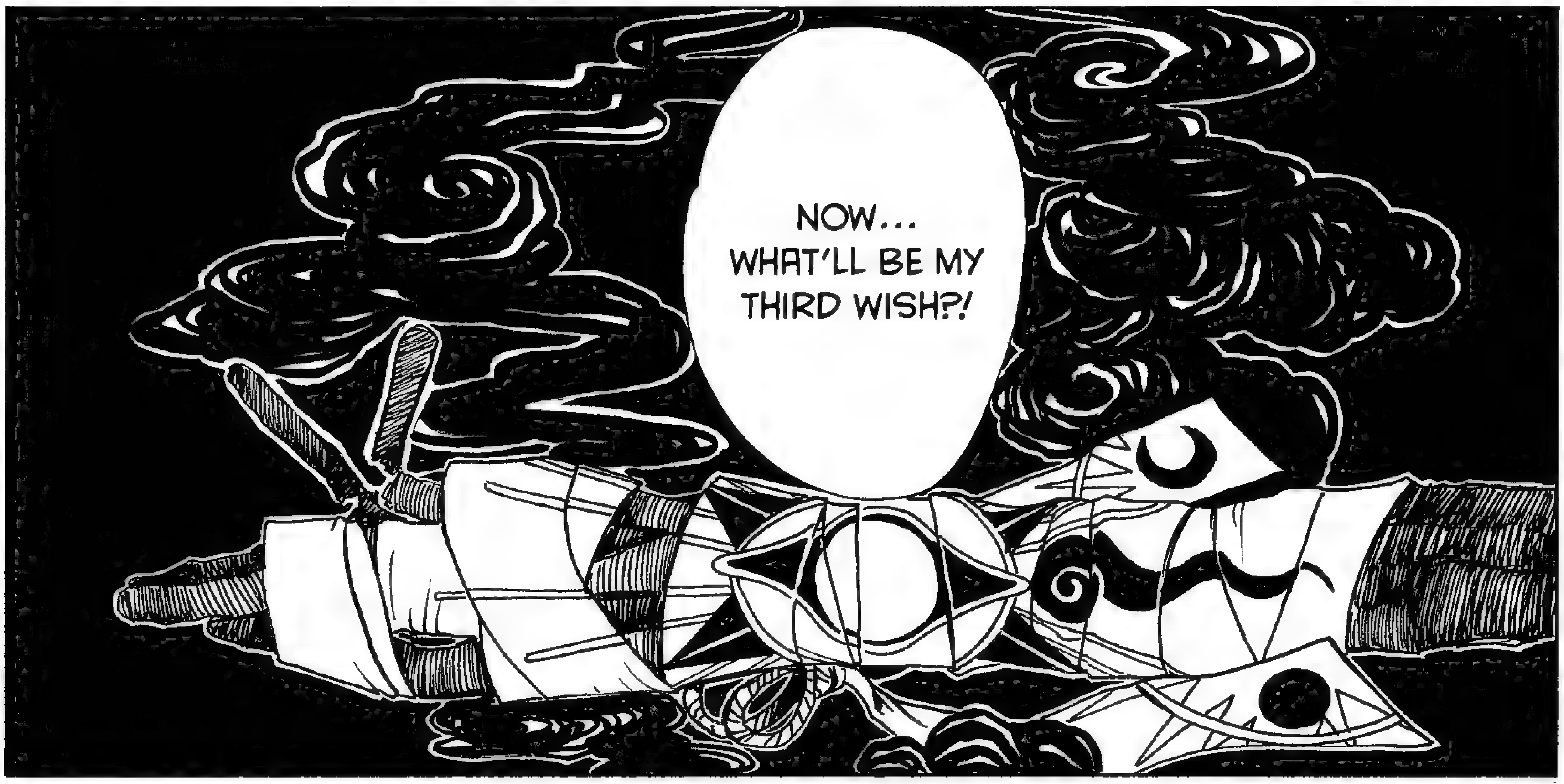
IT RAINED! IT REALLY RAINED!
IT WASN'T JUST A COINCIDENCE, RIGHT? THERE WEREN'T EVEN RAIN CLOUDS AROUND!
SO THIS *IS* THE REAL THING!
LET'S TRY IT ONE MORE TIME! SOMETHING THAT NORMALLY CAN'T HAPPEN.
I'VE GOT IT!

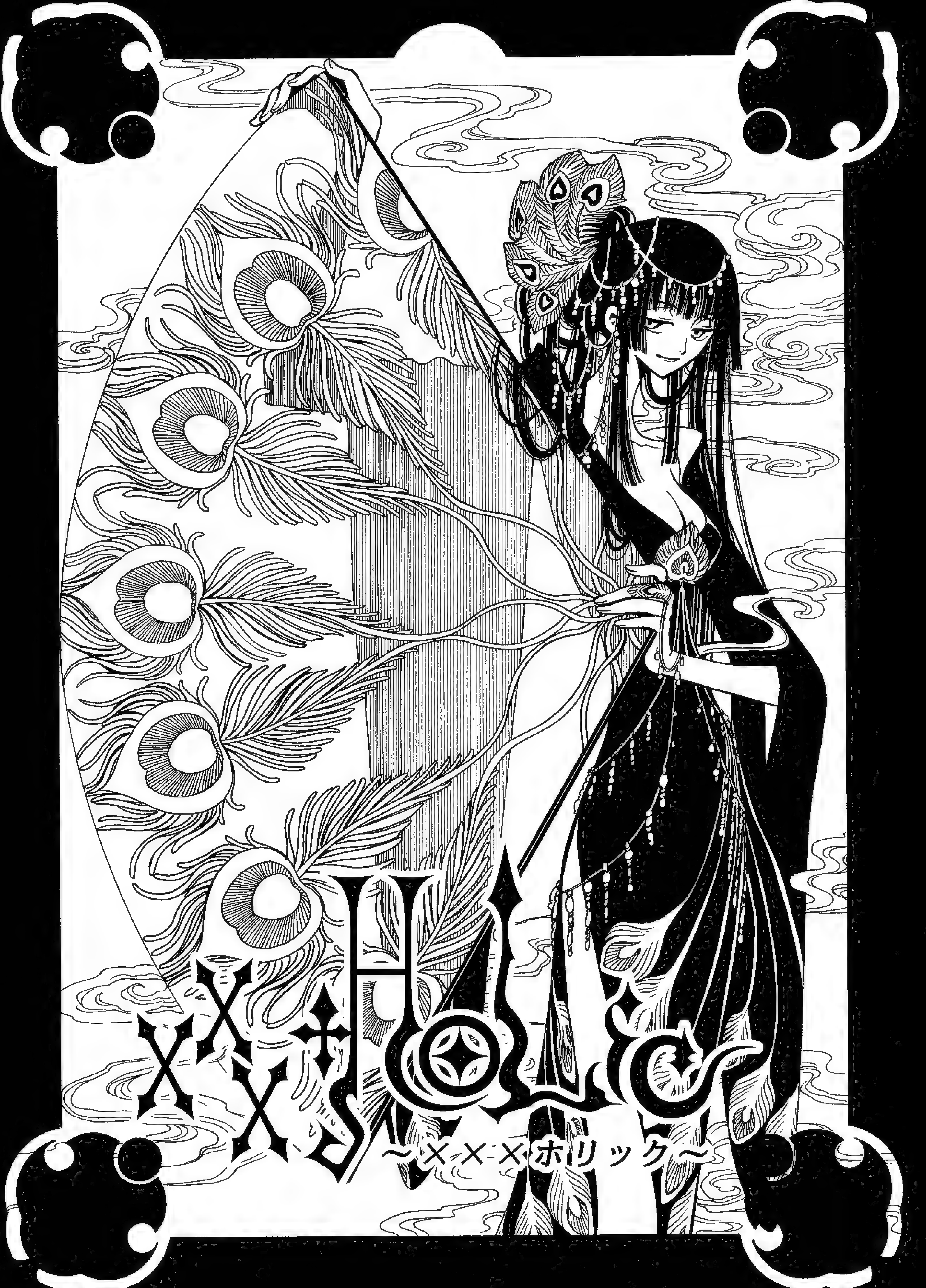

THAT MIRROR I SAW AT THE ANTIQUES SHOP...
IT'S SOMETHING REALLY GOOD! I'VE TRIED SO MANY TIMES, BUT THE GUY WON'T SELL IT!
I WISH IT WERE MINE.
ぱきっ
PAKIK
ごとん
KLUNK

THIS REALLY *IS* THE TRUE MONKEY'S PAW!
THE MIRROR!

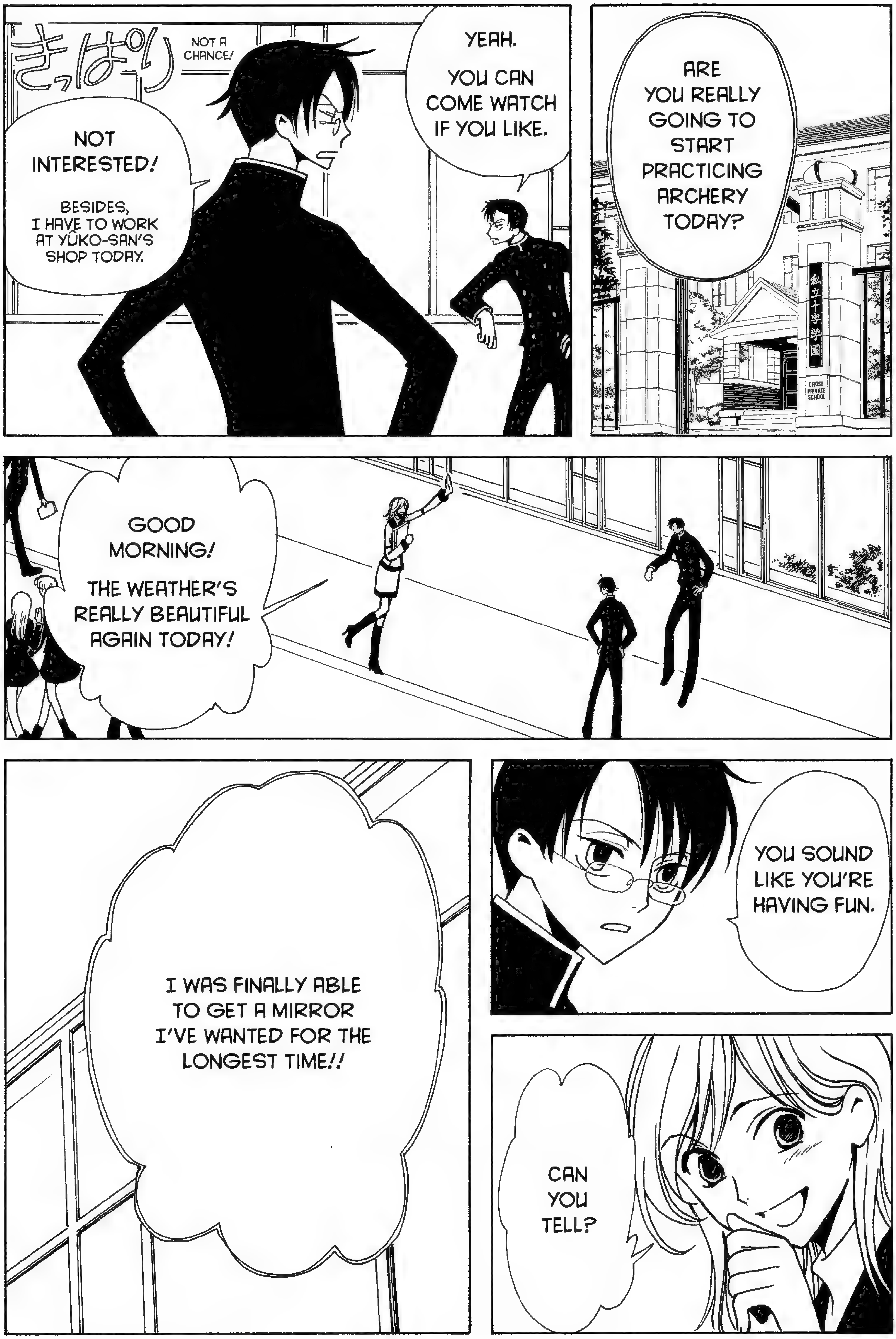

DOES IT MEAN THAT WHEN IT GRANTS A WISH, IT BREAKS ONE FINGER?
THEN I WOULD HAVE THREE MORE WISHES.
TWO FINGERS ARE BROKEN.
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, THE LADY OF THE SHOP SAID...
...THAT SHE WOULDN'T RECOMMEND IT FOR ME.

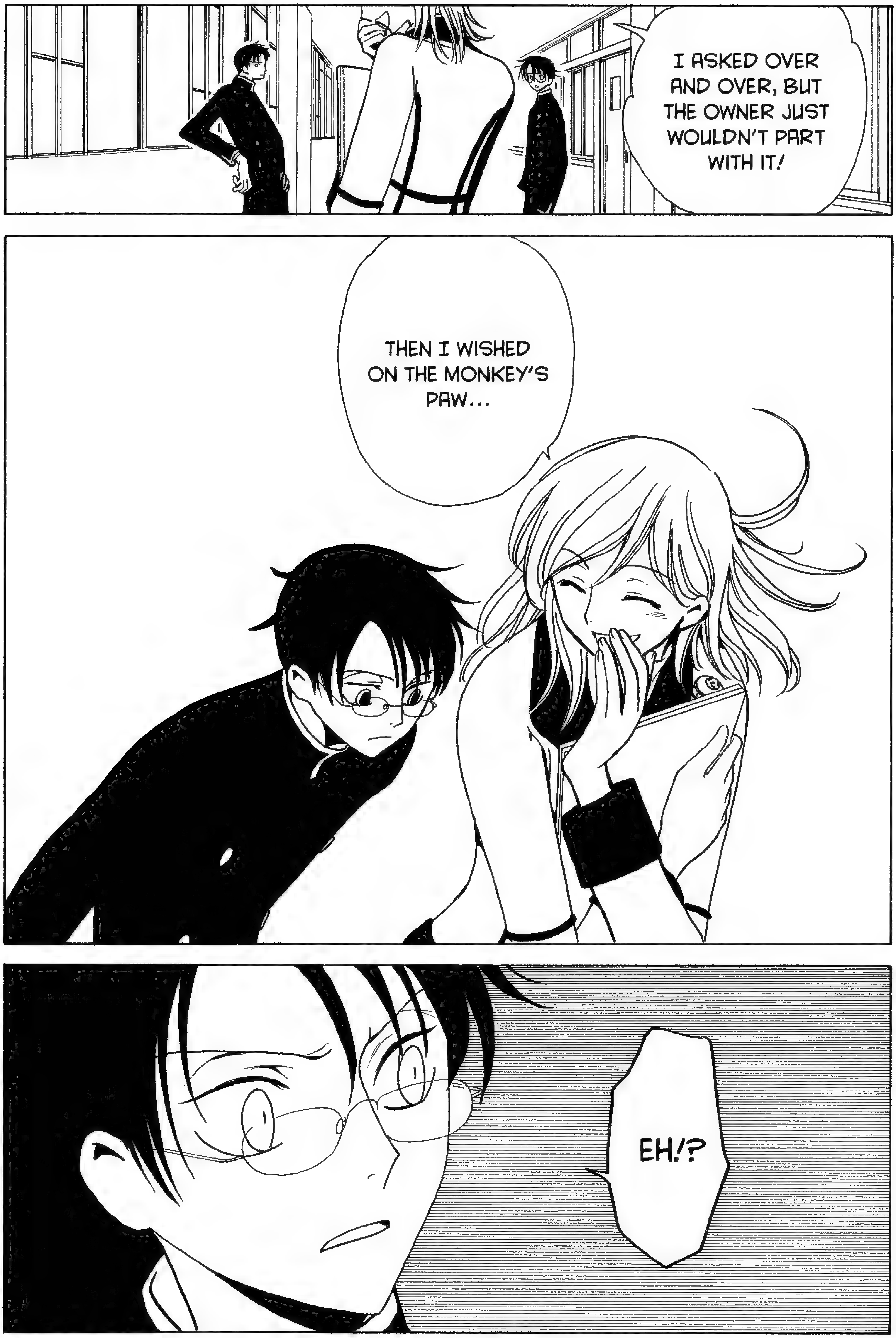

THE MYTHS AND LEGENDS THAT TALK ABOUT THE MONKEY'S PAW...
...SAY THAT THE WISHES IT GRANTS ALL END UP BADLY.
BUT I KNOW THAT *I'LL* BE OKAY!

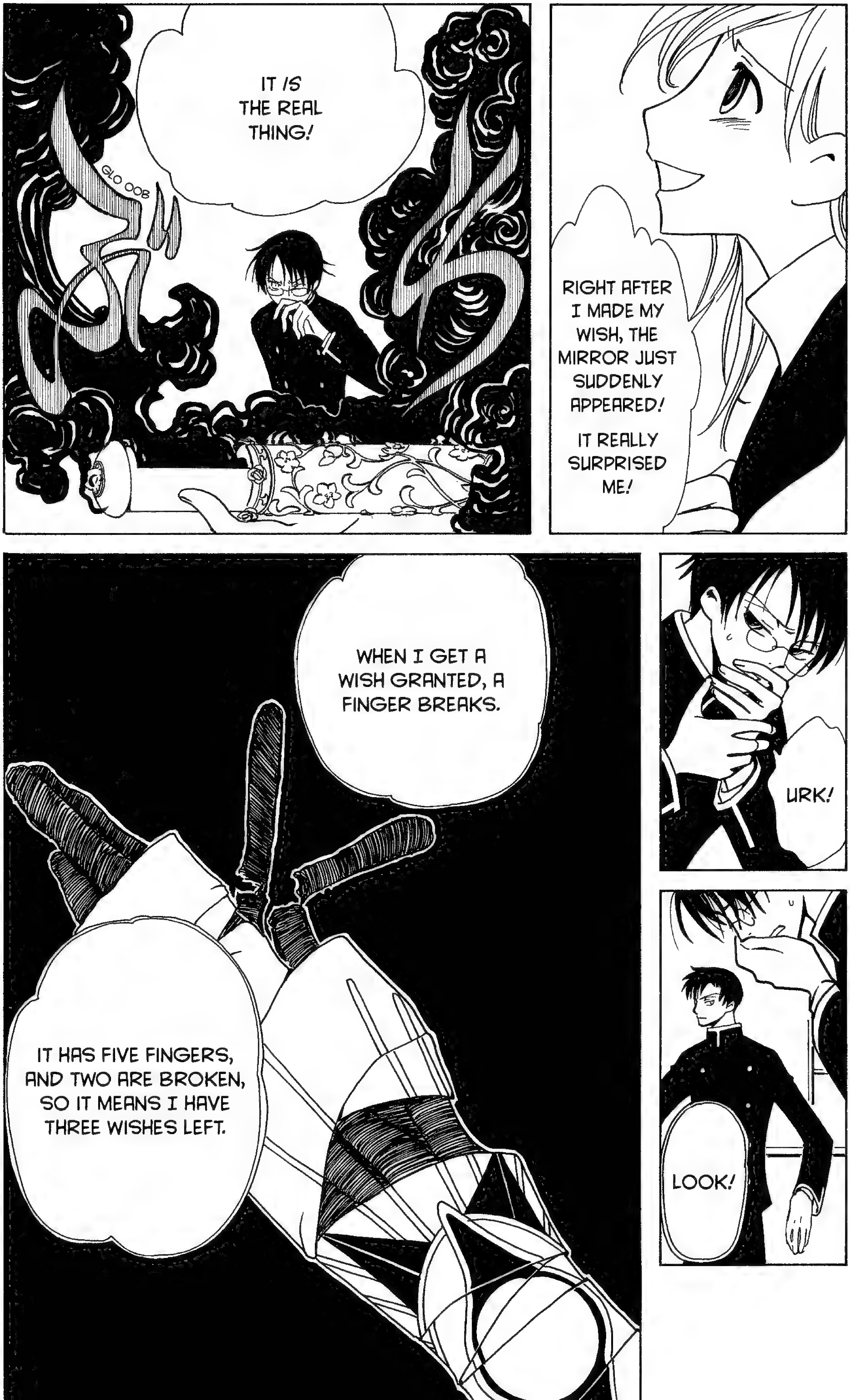

NOW... WHAT'LL BE MY THIRD WISH?!

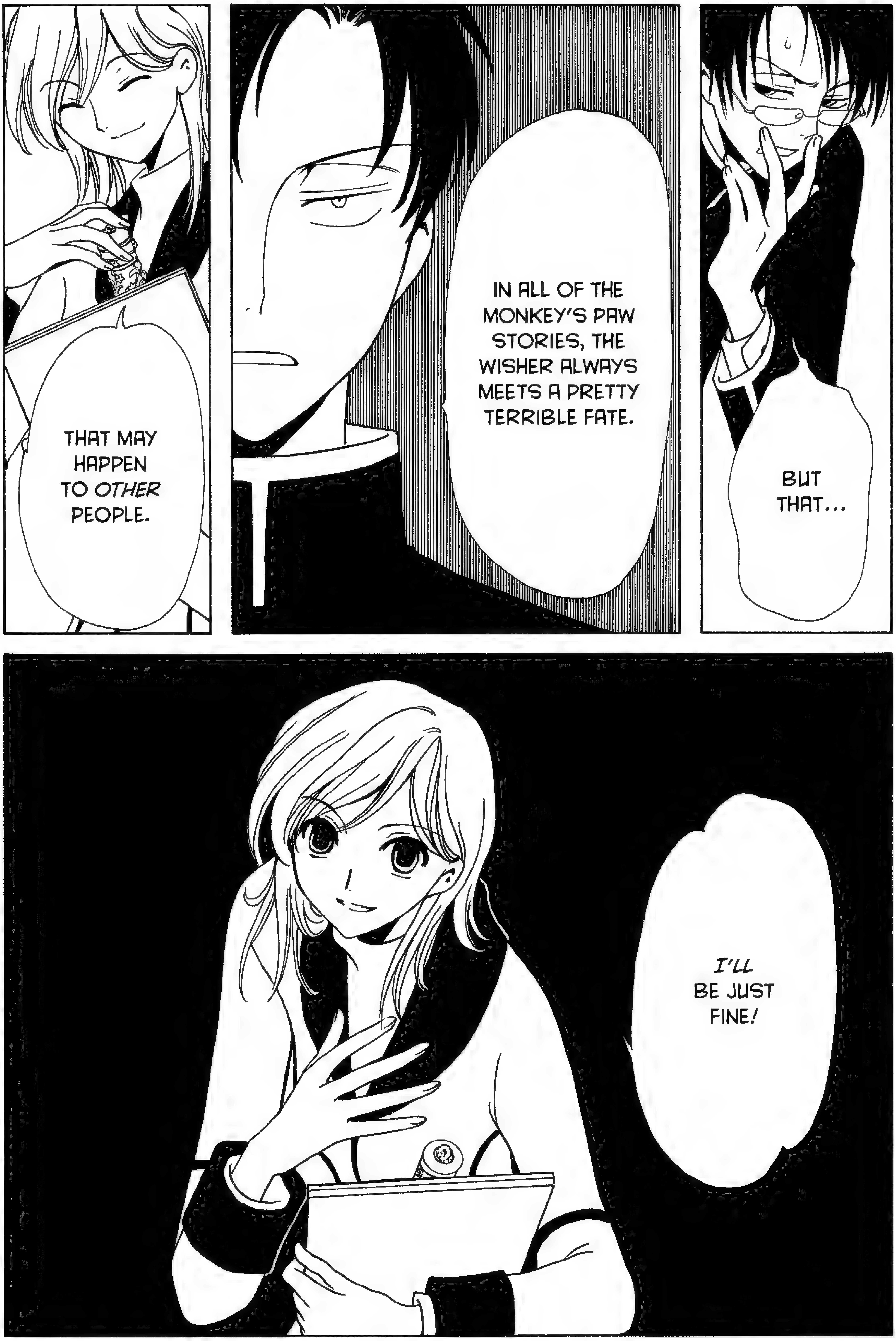

xxxHOLiC
〜×××ホリック〜

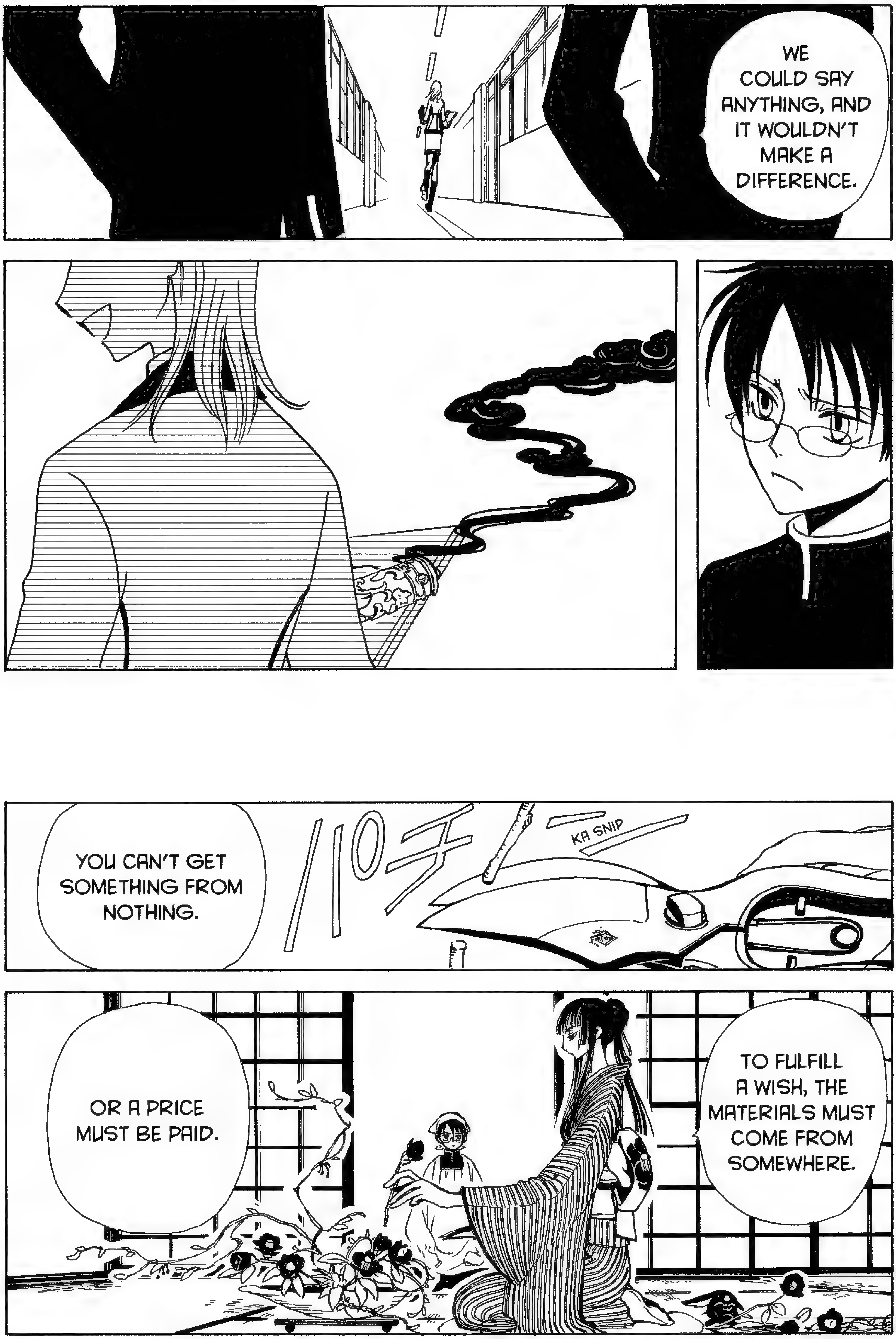
I SEE. THE MIRROR VANISHED.
THE ONE AT YOUR SHOP WAS THE "YATA NO KAGAMI" MIRROR, WASN'T IT?
IT ISN'T AS IF JUST ANYONE COULD WALK OFF WITH IT.
WHY IT VANISHED ?
YES, I HAVE A HUNCH.
BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO WAIT A LITTLE LONGER REGARDING THAT...
...BECAUSE THE "STONE" HAS ALREADY STARTED ROLLING.

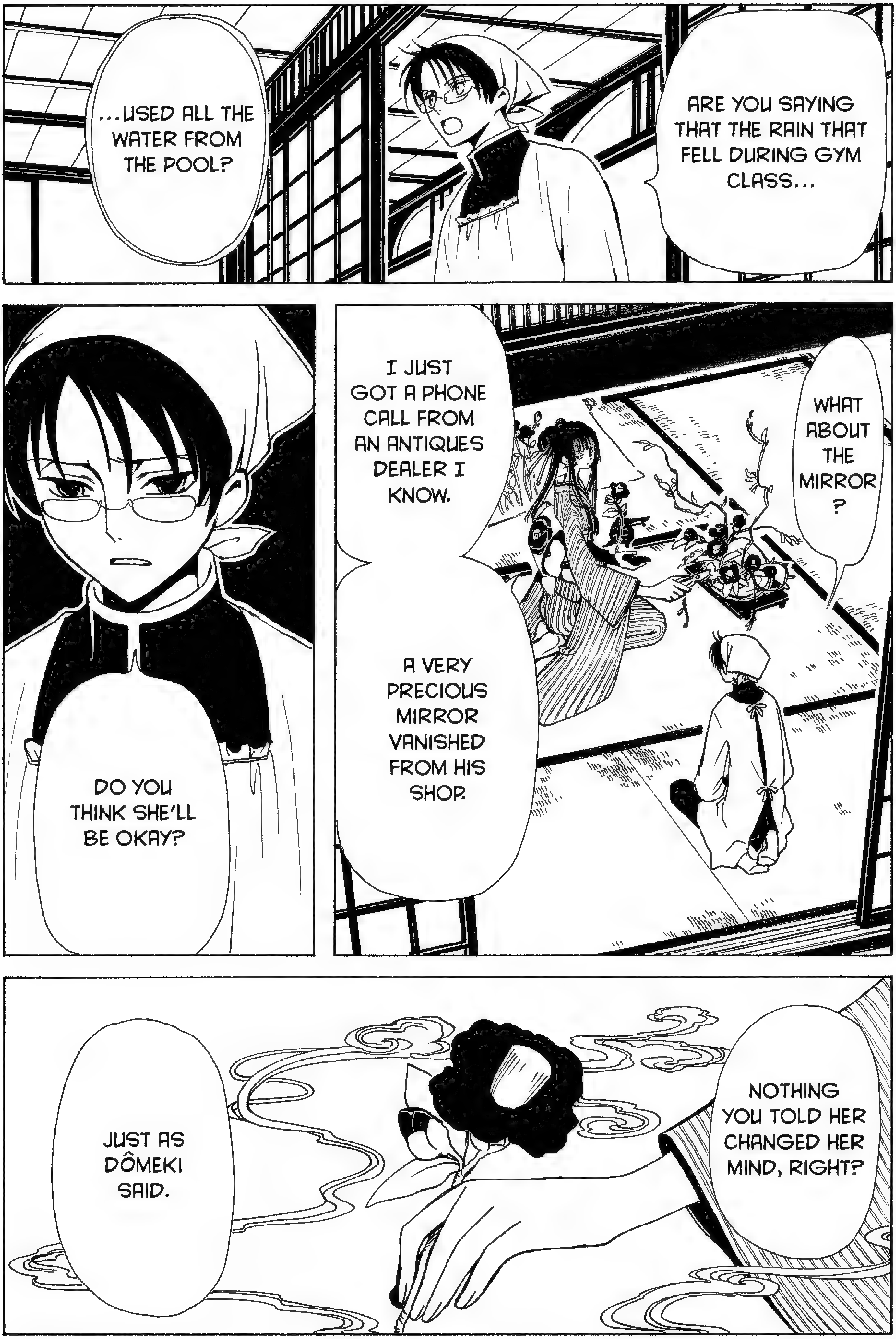

ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO START PRACTICING ARCHERY TODAY?
CROSS PRIVATE SCHOOL
YEAH. YOU CAN COME WATCH IF YOU LIKE.
NOT A CHANCE!
NOT INTERESTED! BESIDES, I HAVE TO WORK AT YÛKO-SAN'S SHOP TODAY.
GOOD MORNING! THE WEATHER'S REALLY BEAUTIFUL AGAIN TODAY!
YOU SOUND LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN.
CAN YOU TELL?
I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO GET A MIRROR I'VE WANTED FOR THE LONGEST TIME!!

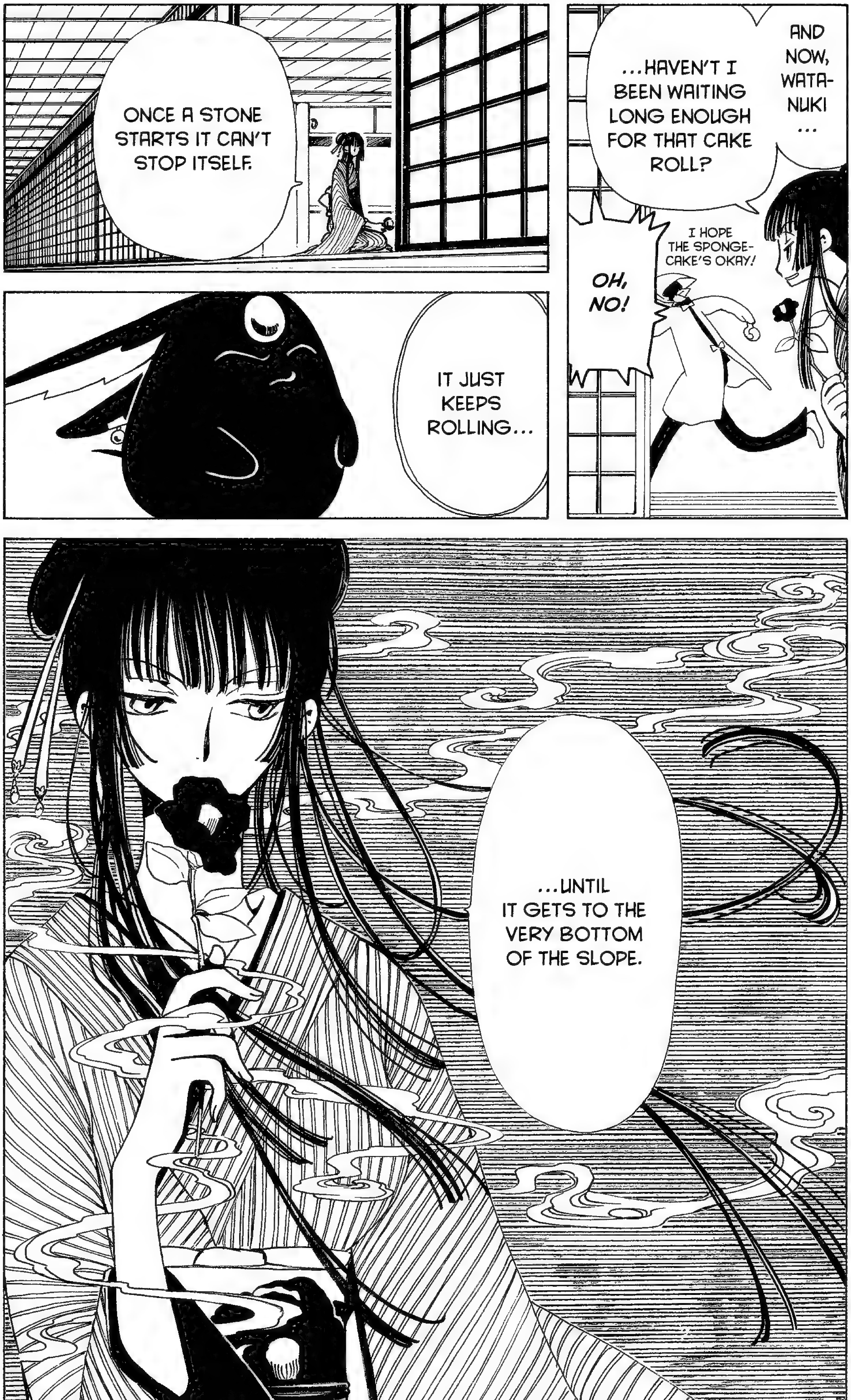

I ASKED OVER AND OVER, BUT THE OWNER JUST WOULDN'T PART WITH IT!
THEN I WISHED ON THE MONKEY'S PAW…
EH!?

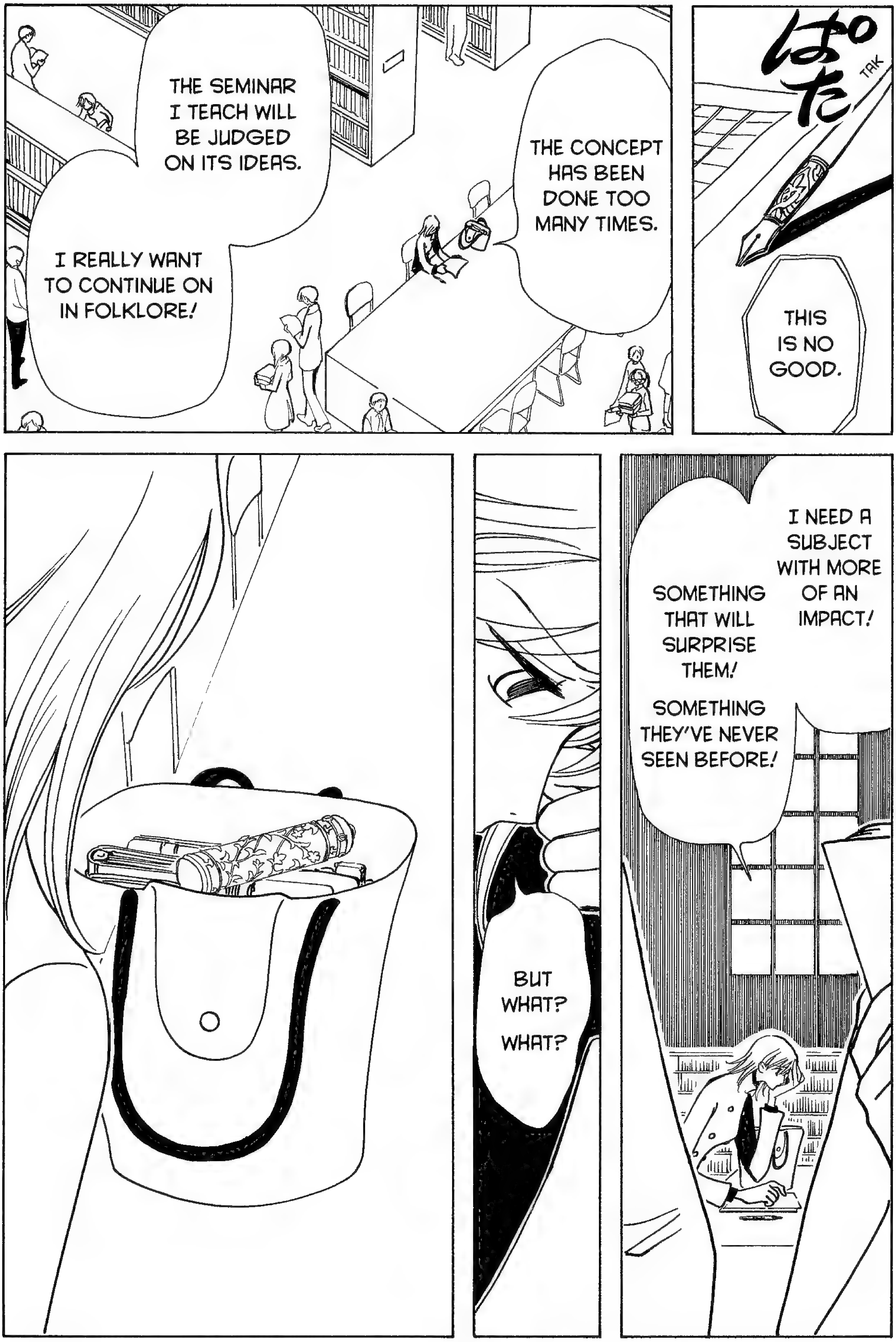

RIGHT AFTER I MADE MY WISH, THE MIRROR JUST SUDDENLY APPEARED!
IT REALLY SURPRISED ME!
IT IS THE REAL THING!
GLO OOB
URK!
LOOK!
WHEN I GET A WISH GRANTED, A FINGER BREAKS.
IT HAS FIVE FINGERS, AND TWO ARE BROKEN, SO IT MEANS I HAVE THREE WISHES LEFT.

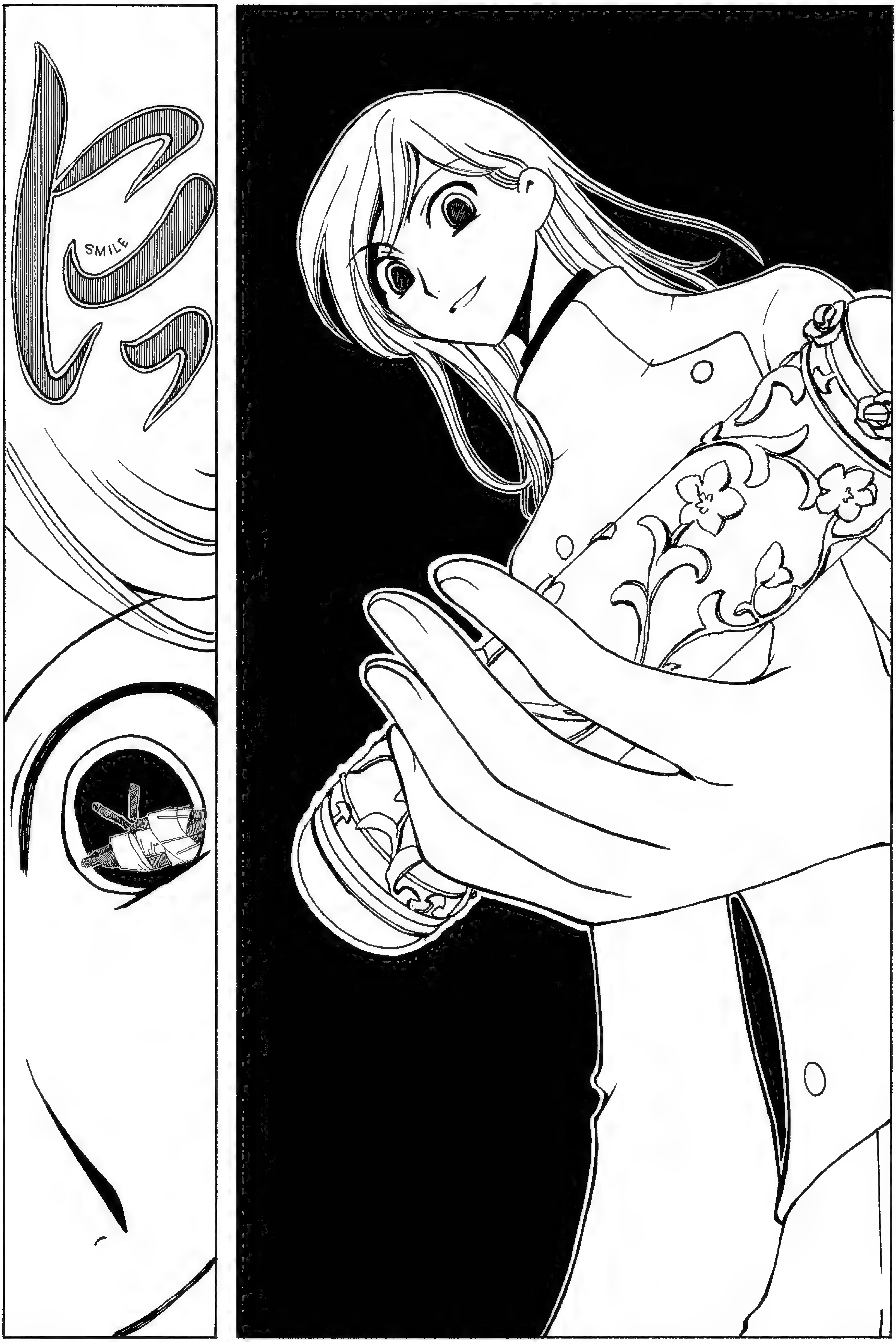

BUT THAT…
IN ALL OF THE MONKEY'S PAW STORIES, THE WISHER ALWAYS MEETS A PRETTY TERRIBLE FATE.
THAT MAY HAPPEN TO *OTHER* PEOPLE.
I'LL BE JUST FINE!

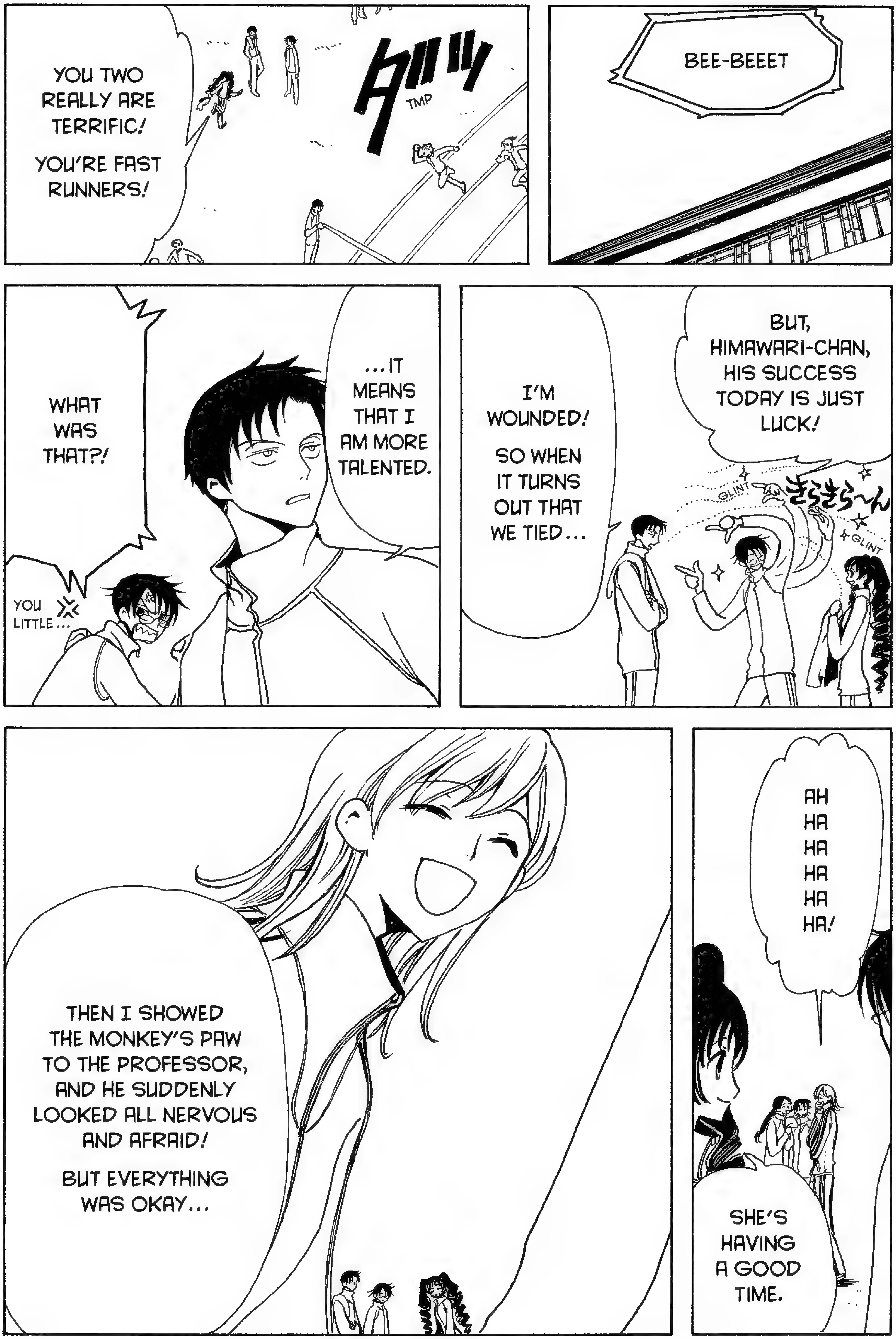

WE COULD SAY ANYTHING, AND IT WOULDN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
パチン
KA SNIP
YOU CAN'T GET SOMETHING FROM NOTHING.
TO FULFILL A WISH, THE MATERIALS MUST COME FROM SOMEWHERE.
OR A PRICE MUST BE PAID.

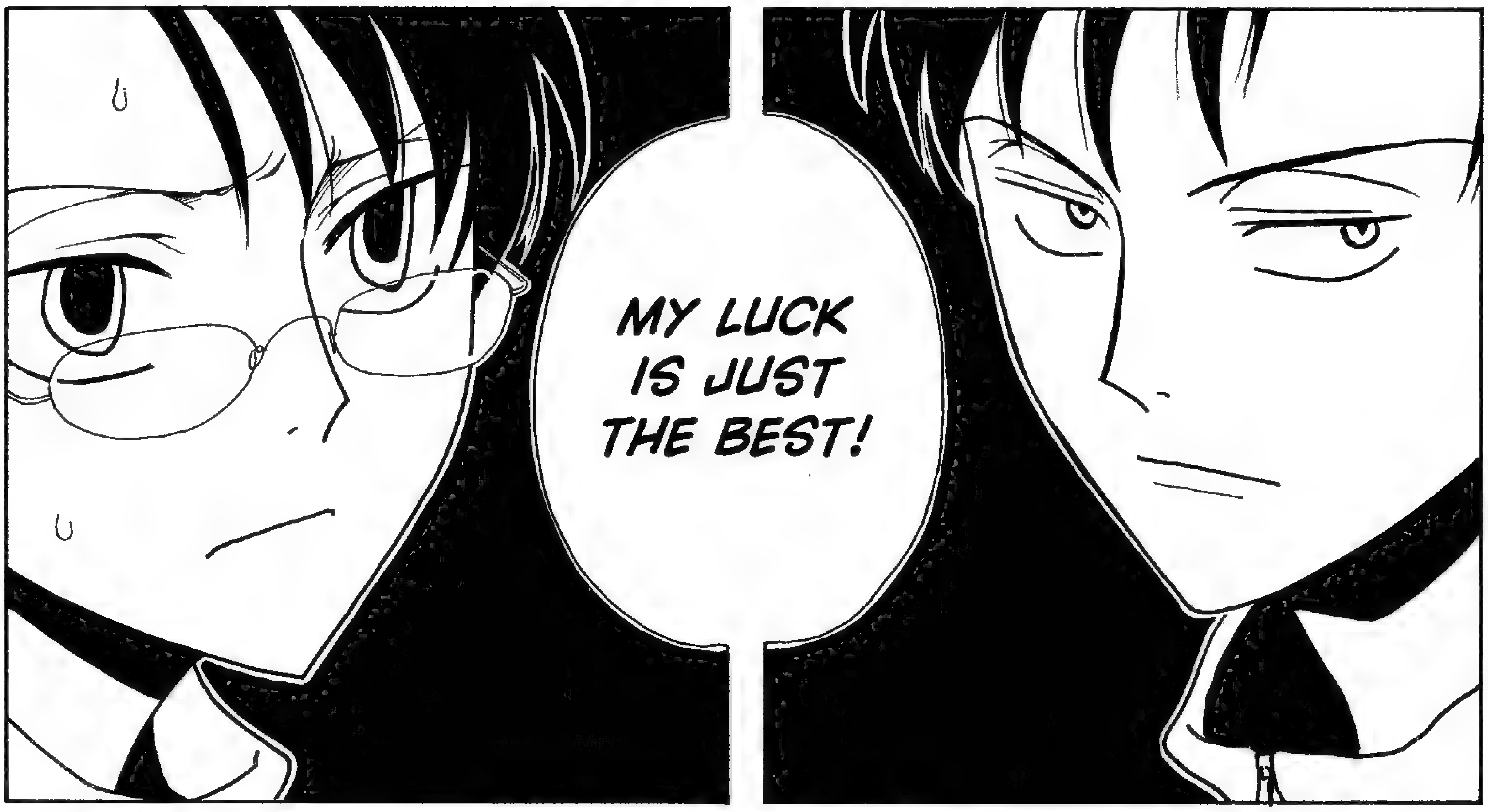

ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE RAIN THAT FELL DURING GYM CLASS...
...USED ALL THE WATER FROM THE POOL?
WHAT ABOUT THE MIRROR?
I JUST GOT A PHONE CALL FROM AN ANTIQUES DEALER I KNOW.
A VERY PRECIOUS MIRROR VANISHED FROM HIS SHOP.
DO YOU THINK SHE'LL BE OKAY?
NOTHING YOU TOLD HER CHANGED HER MIND, RIGHT?
JUST AS DÔMEKI SAID.

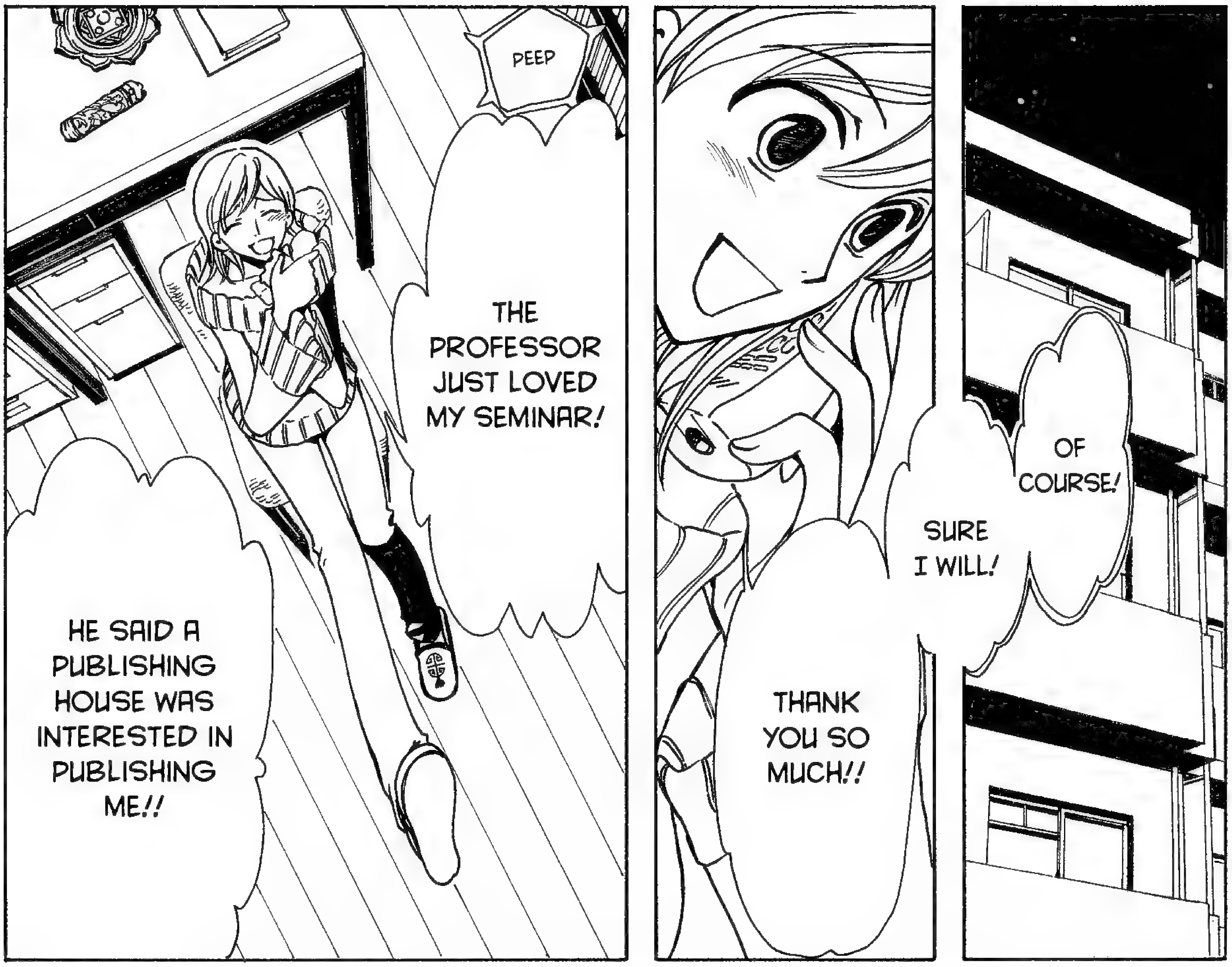

AND NOW, WATANUKI…
…HAVEN'T I BEEN WAITING LONG ENOUGH FOR THAT CAKE ROLL?
I HOPE THE SPONGE-CAKE'S OKAY!
OH, NO!
ONCE A STONE STARTS IT CAN'T STOP ITSELF.
IT JUST KEEPS ROLLING…
…UNTIL IT GETS TO THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE.

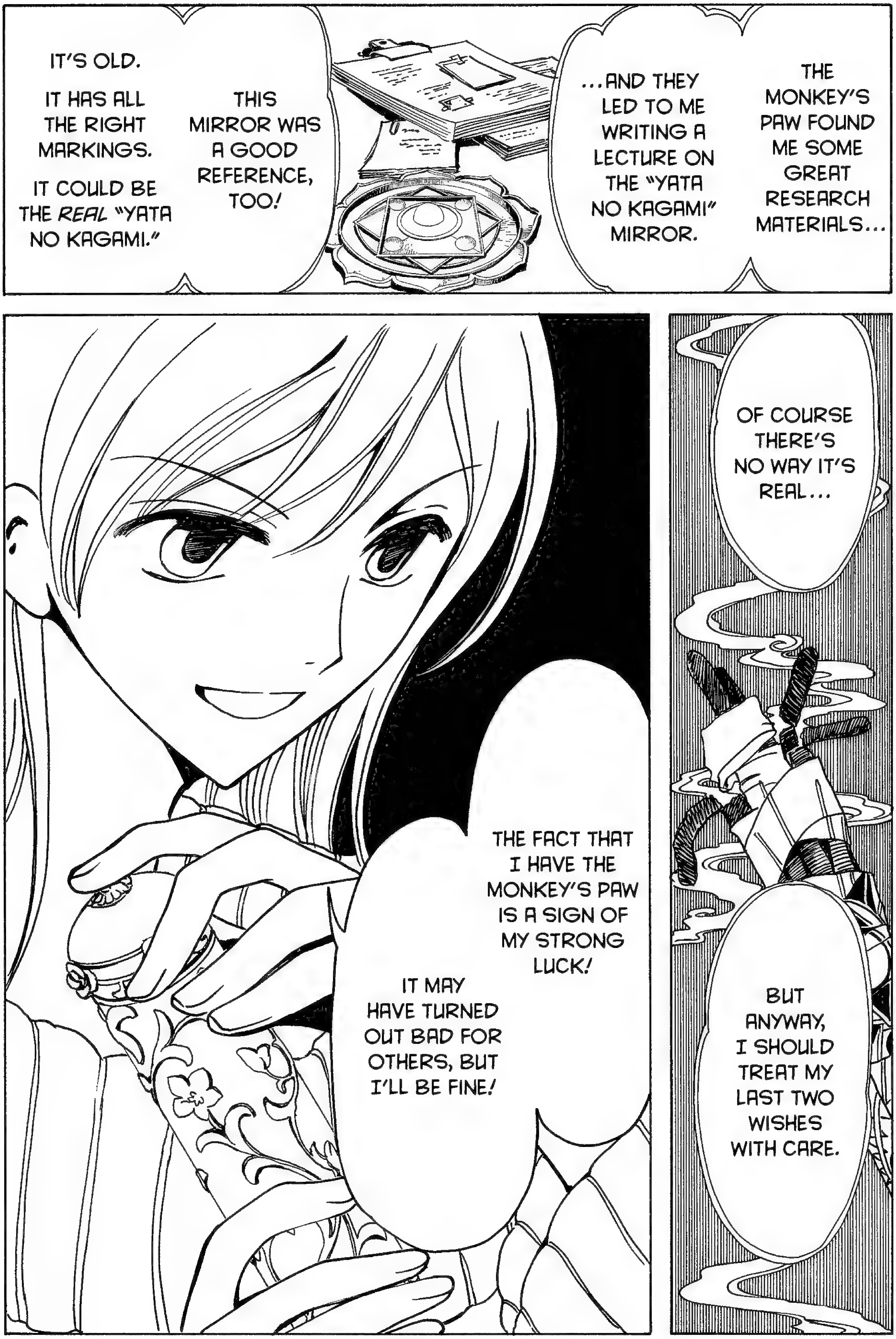

ぱた
TAK
THIS IS NO GOOD.
THE CONCEPT HAS BEEN DONE TOO MANY TIMES.
THE SEMINAR I TEACH WILL BE JUDGED ON ITS IDEAS.
I REALLY WANT TO CONTINUE ON IN FOLKLORE!
I NEED A SUBJECT WITH MORE OF AN IMPACT!
SOMETHING THAT WILL SURPRISE THEM!
SOMETHING THEY'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!
BUT WHAT?
WHAT?


にっ
SMILE


BEE-BEEET
タッ
TMP
YOU TWO REALLY ARE TERRIFIC! YOU'RE FAST RUNNERS!
BUT, HIMAWARI-CHAN, HIS SUCCESS TODAY IS JUST LUCK!
きらきら〜ん
GLINT
GLINT
I'M WOUNDED! SO WHEN IT TURNS OUT THAT WE TIED...
...IT MEANS THAT I AM MORE TALENTED.
WHAT WAS THAT?!
YOU LITTLE...
AH HA HA HA HA HA!
SHE'S HAVING A GOOD TIME.
THEN I SHOWED THE MONKEY'S PAW TO THE PROFESSOR, AND HE SUDDENLY LOOKED ALL NERVOUS AND AFRAID! BUT EVERYTHING WAS OKAY...


MY LUCK IS JUST THE BEST!


OF COURSE!
SURE I WILL!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!!
PEEP
THE PROFESSOR JUST LOVED MY SEMINAR!
HE SAID A PUBLISHING HOUSE WAS INTERESTED IN PUBLISHING ME!!


THE MONKEY'S PAW FOUND ME SOME GREAT RESEARCH MATERIALS...
...AND THEY LED TO ME WRITING A LECTURE ON THE "YATA NO KAGAMI" MIRROR.
THIS MIRROR WAS A GOOD REFERENCE, TOO!
IT'S OLD. IT HAS ALL THE RIGHT MARKINGS. IT COULD BE THE *REAL* "YATA NO KAGAMI."
OF COURSE THERE'S NO WAY IT'S REAL...
BUT ANYWAY, I SHOULD TREAT MY LAST TWO WISHES WITH CARE.
THE FACT THAT I HAVE THE MONKEY'S PAW IS A SIGN OF MY STRONG LUCK!
IT MAY HAVE TURNED OUT BAD FOR OTHERS, BUT I'LL BE FINE!

xxxHOLiC
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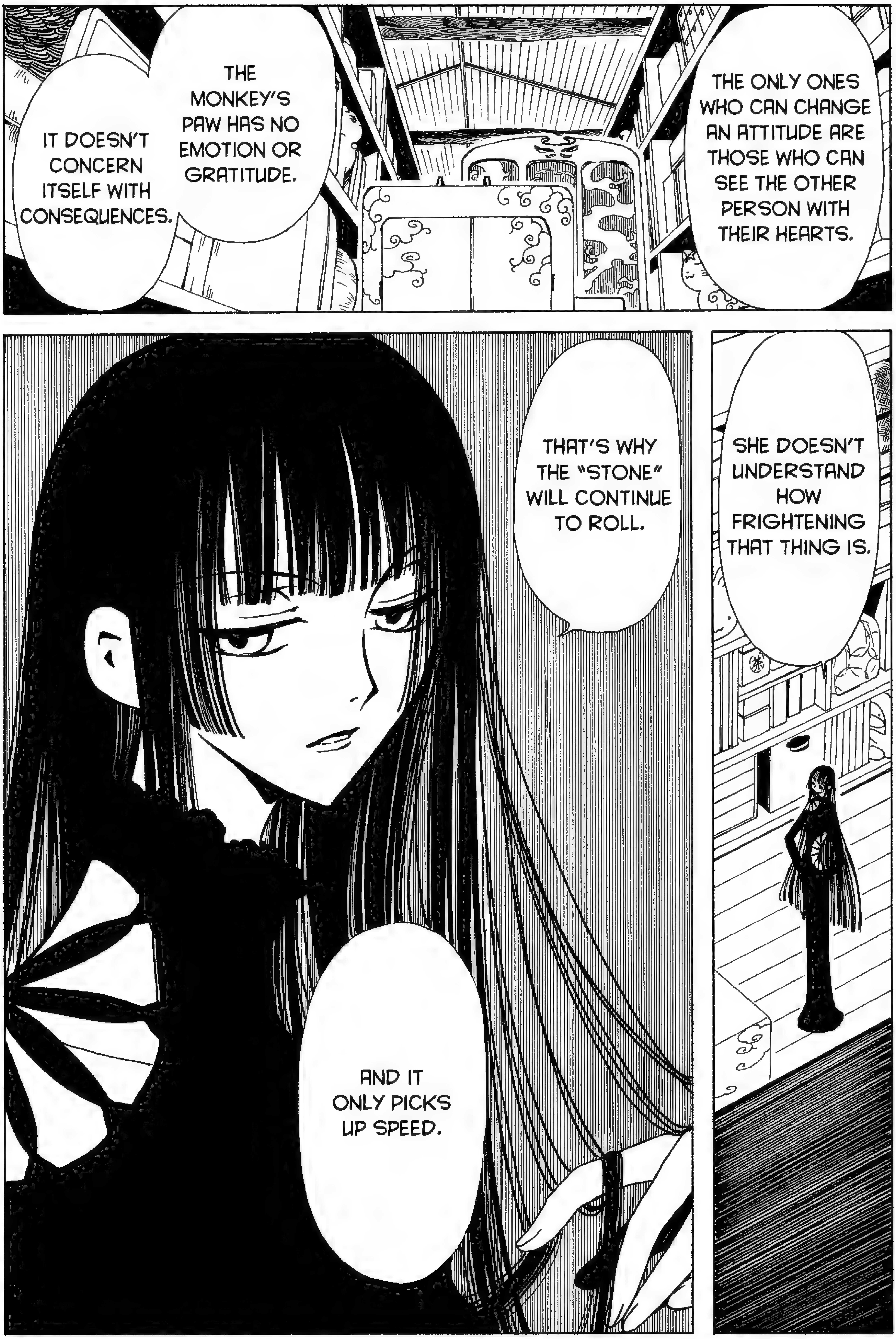
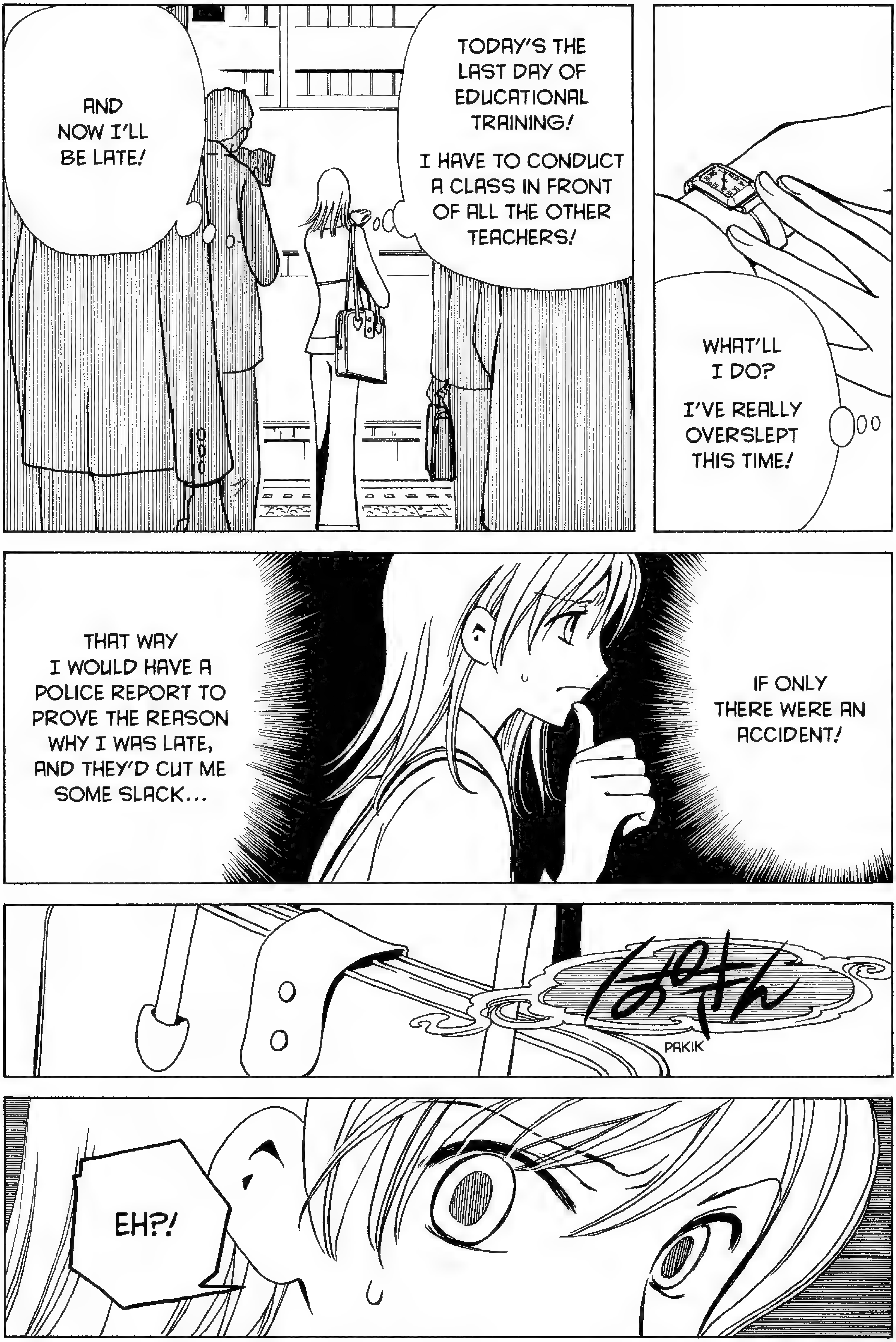
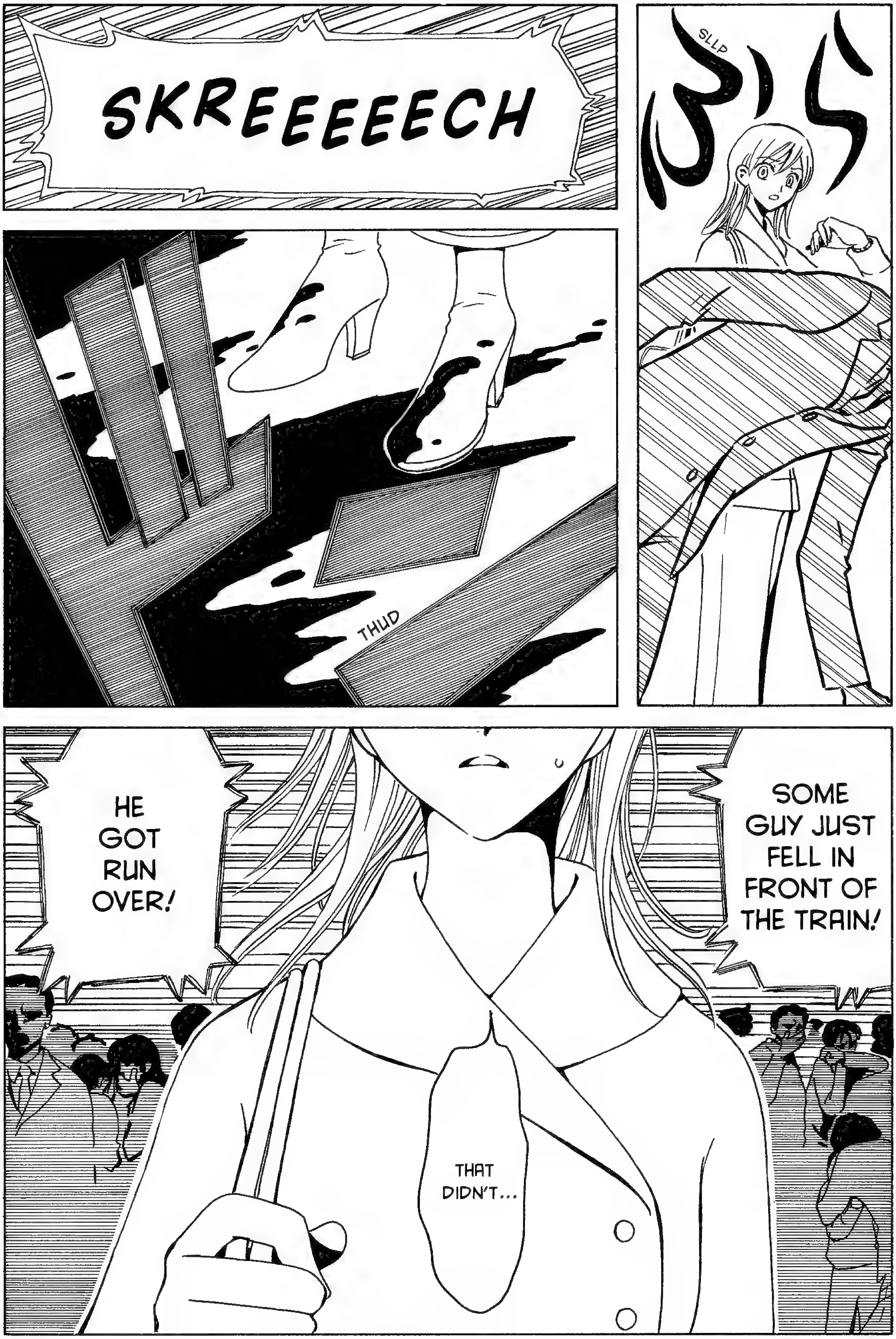
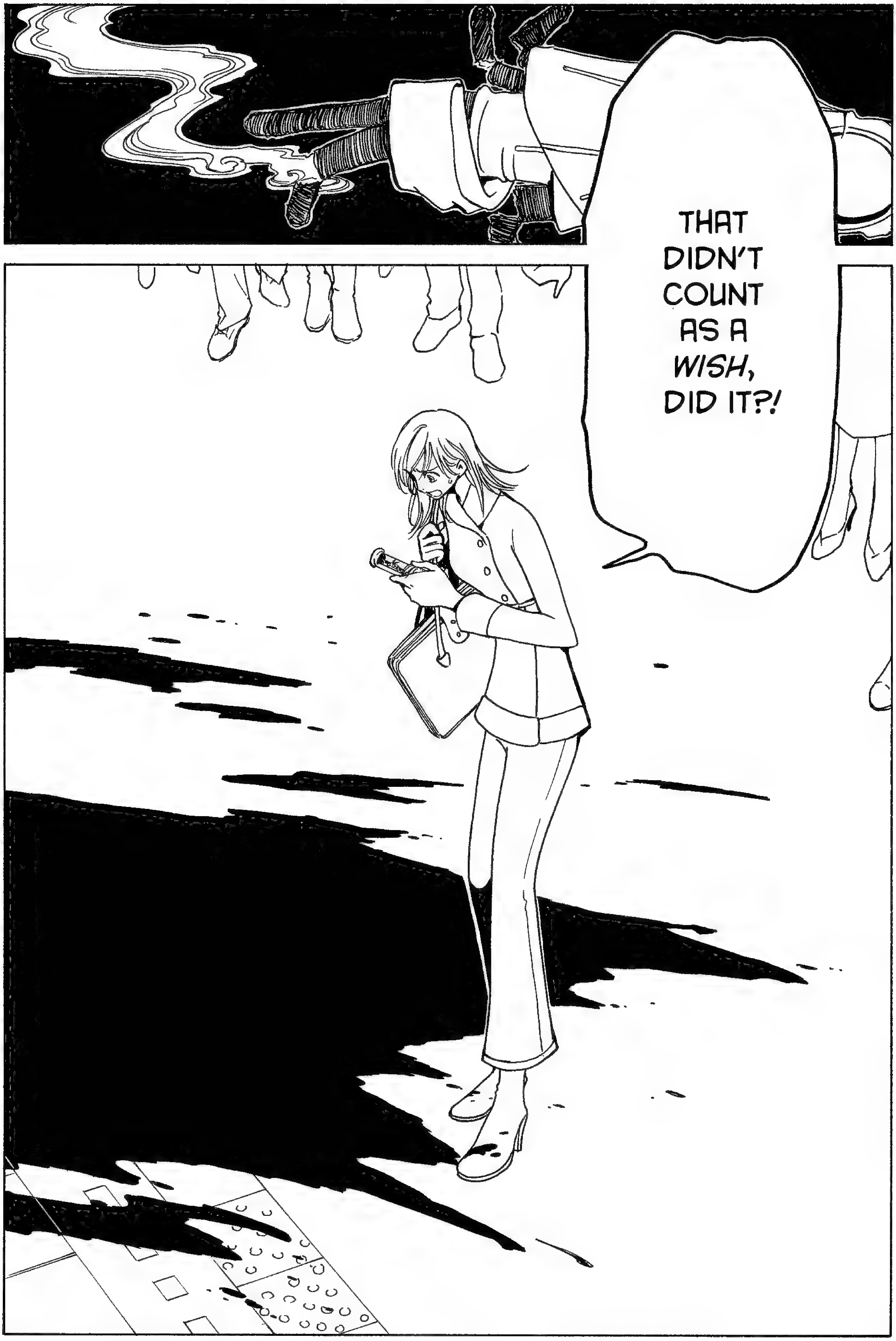
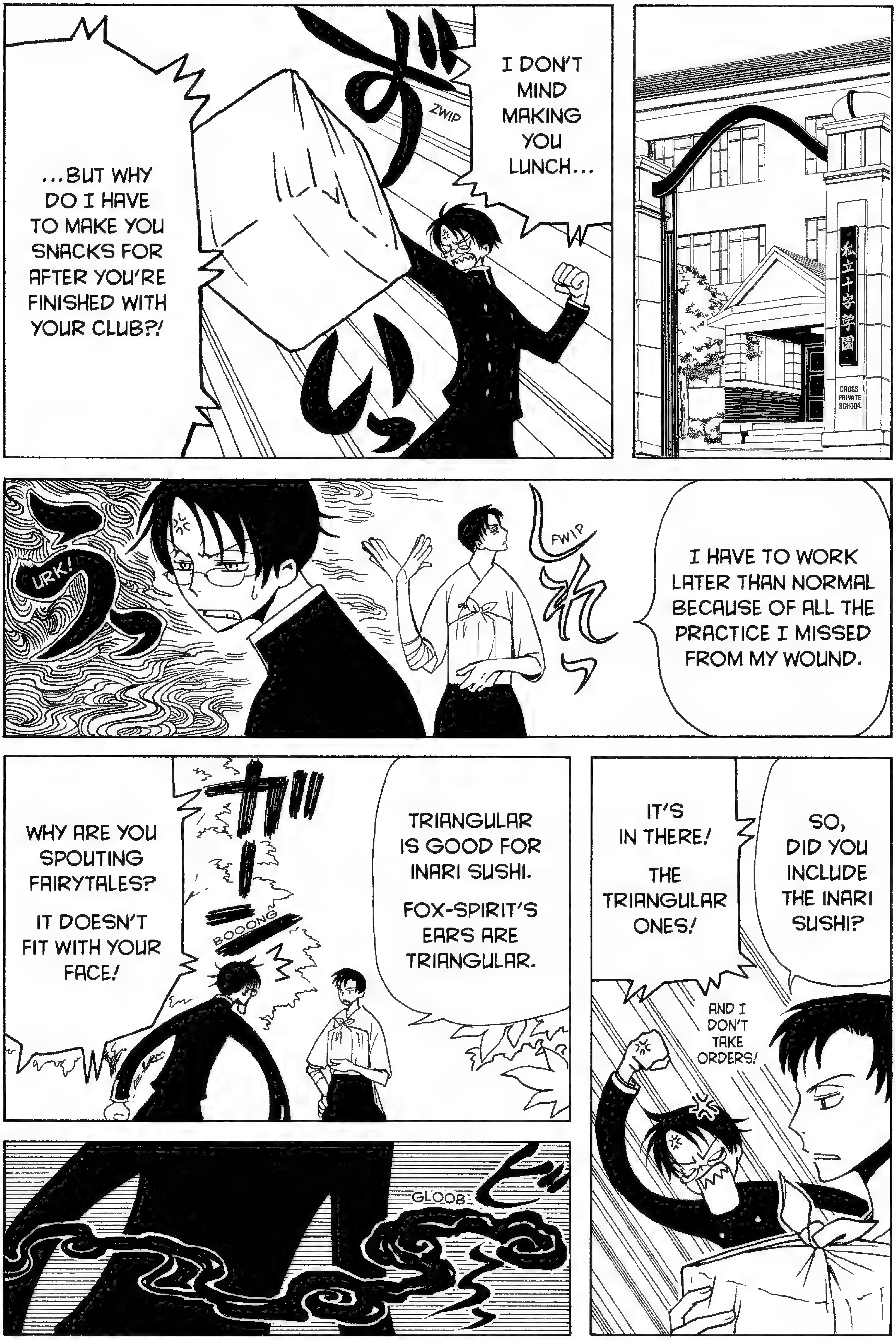

THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN CHANGE AN ATTITUDE ARE THOSE WHO CAN SEE THE OTHER PERSON WITH THEIR HEARTS.
THE MONKEY'S PAW HAS NO EMOTION OR GRATITUDE.
IT DOESN'T CONCERN ITSELF WITH CONSEQUENCES.
SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW FRIGHTENING THAT THING IS.
THAT'S WHY THE "STONE" WILL CONTINUE TO ROLL.
AND IT ONLY PICKS UP SPEED.

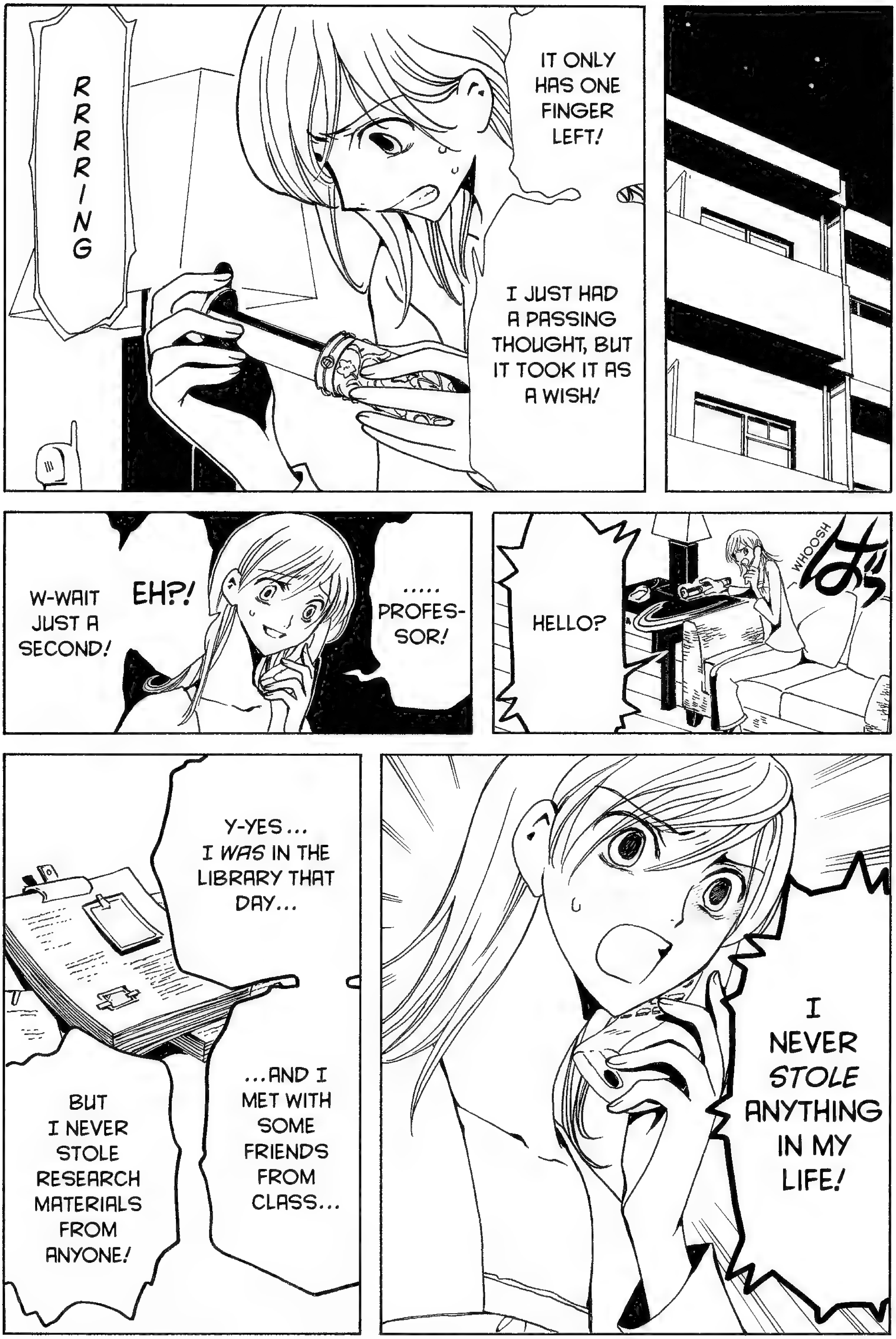

WHAT'LL I DO?
I'VE REALLY OVERSLEPT THIS TIME!
TODAY'S THE LAST DAY OF EDUCATIONAL TRAINING!
I HAVE TO CONDUCT A CLASS IN FRONT OF ALL THE OTHER TEACHERS!
AND NOW I'LL BE LATE!
IF ONLY THERE WERE AN ACCIDENT!
THAT WAY I WOULD HAVE A POLICE REPORT TO PROVE THE REASON WHY I WAS LATE, AND THEY'D CUT ME SOME SLACK...
ぱきん
PAKIK
EH?!

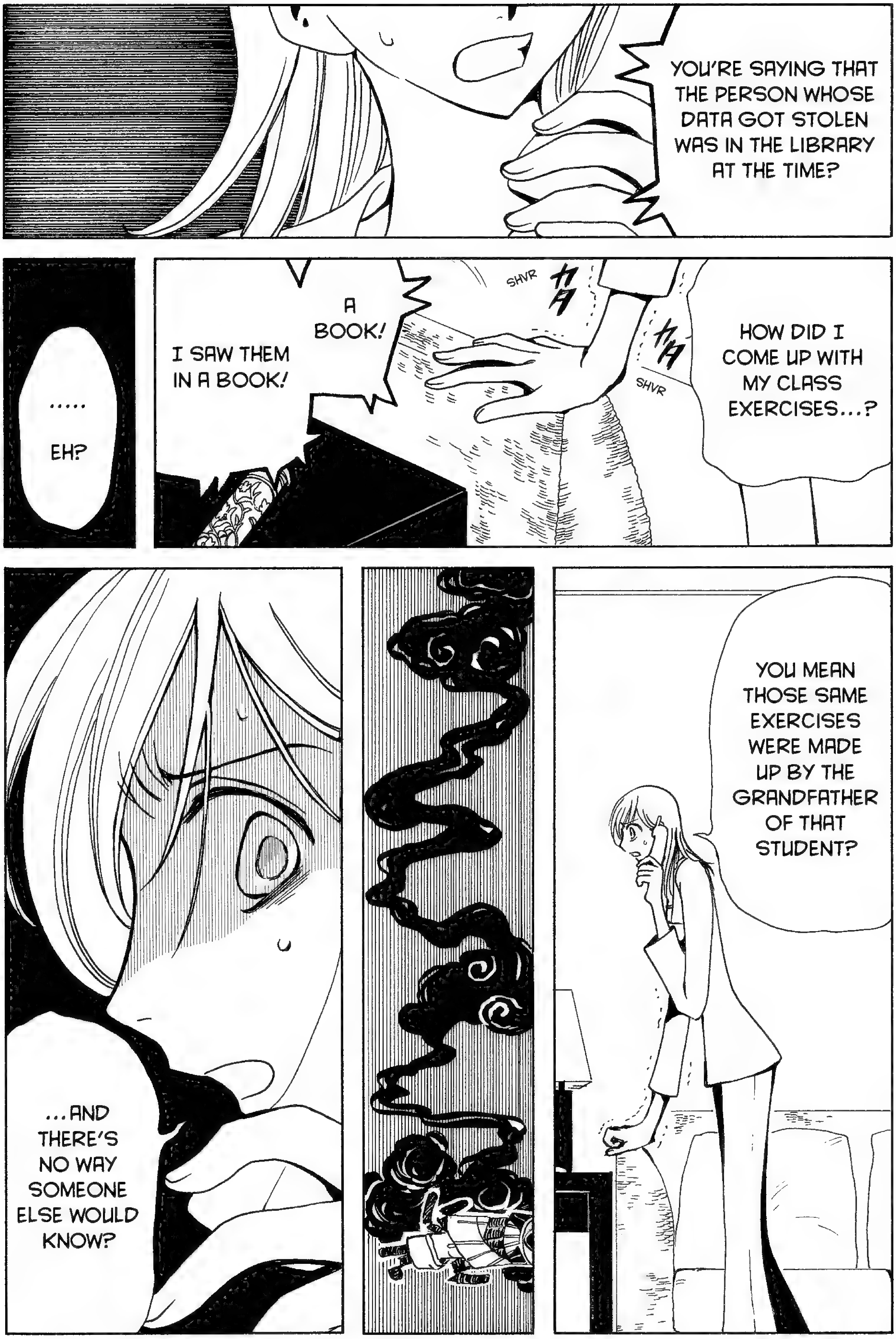

SLLP
ふら
SKREEEEECH
THUD
SOME GUY JUST FELL IN FRONT OF THE TRAIN!
HE GOT RUN OVER!
THAT DIDN'T...

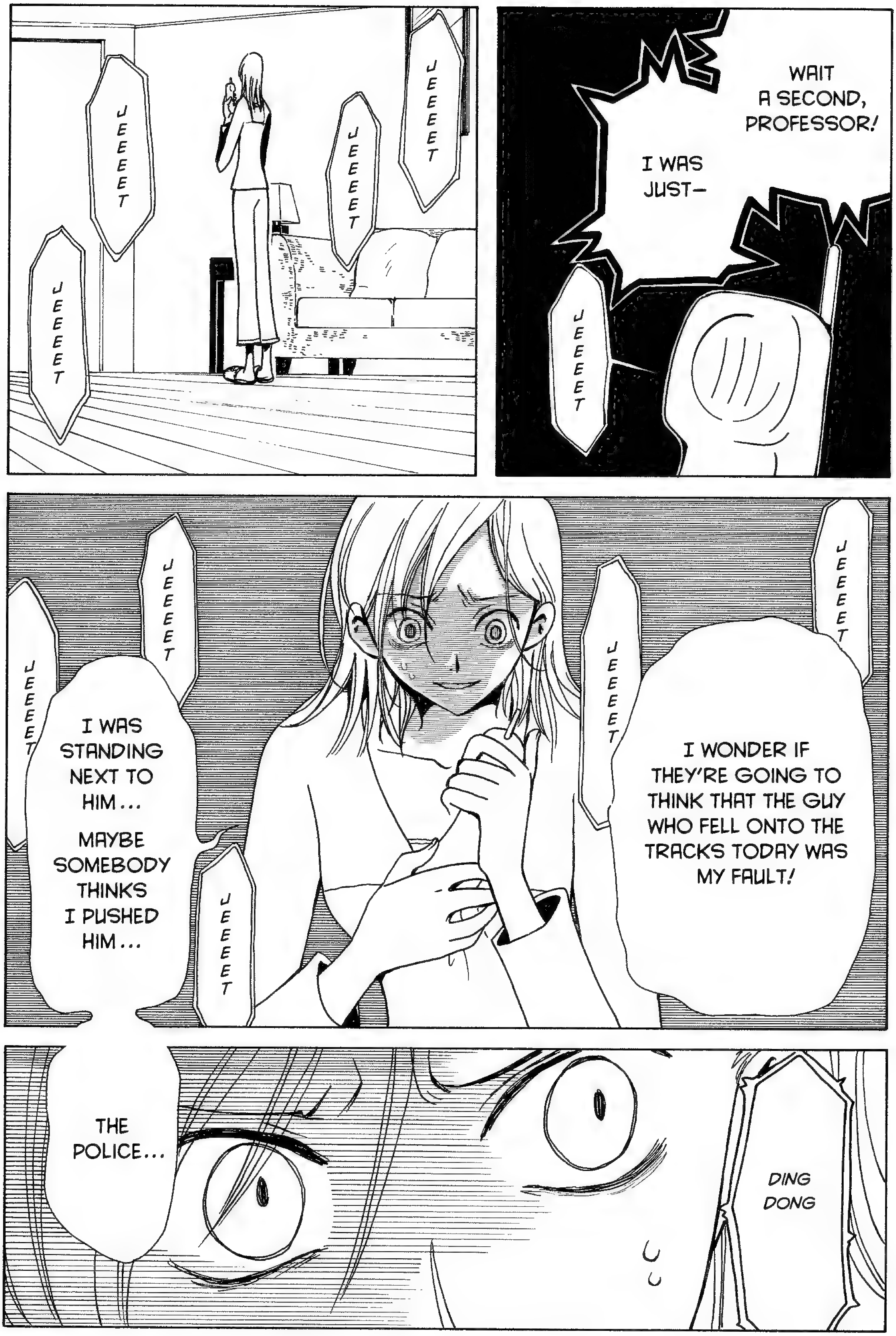

THAT DIDN'T COUNT AS A *WISH*, DID IT?!

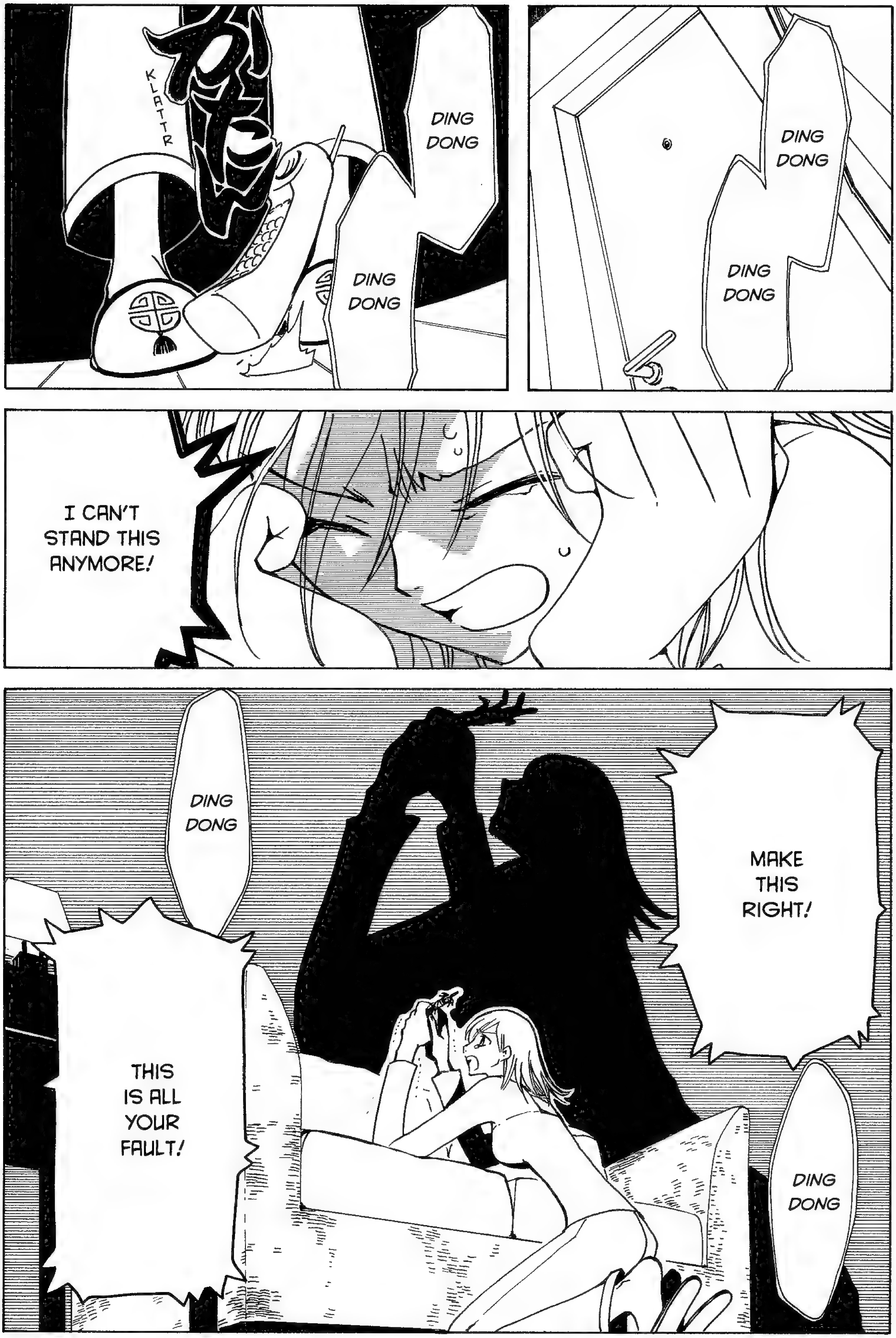

私立十字学園
CROSS PRIVATE SCHOOL
I DON'T MIND MAKING YOU LUNCH...
ZWIP
...BUT WHY DO I HAVE TO MAKE YOU SNACKS FOR AFTER YOU'RE FINISHED WITH YOUR CLUB?!
I HAVE TO WORK LATER THAN NORMAL BECAUSE OF ALL THE PRACTICE I MISSED FROM MY WOUND.
FWIP
URK!
SO, DID YOU INCLUDE THE INARI SUSHI?
IT'S IN THERE! THE TRIANGULAR ONES!
AND I DON'T TAKE ORDERS!
TRIANGULAR IS GOOD FOR INARI SUSHI. FOX-SPIRIT'S EARS ARE TRIANGULAR.
BOOONG
WHY ARE YOU SPOUTING FAIRYTALES? IT DOESN'T FIT WITH YOUR FACE!
GLOOB

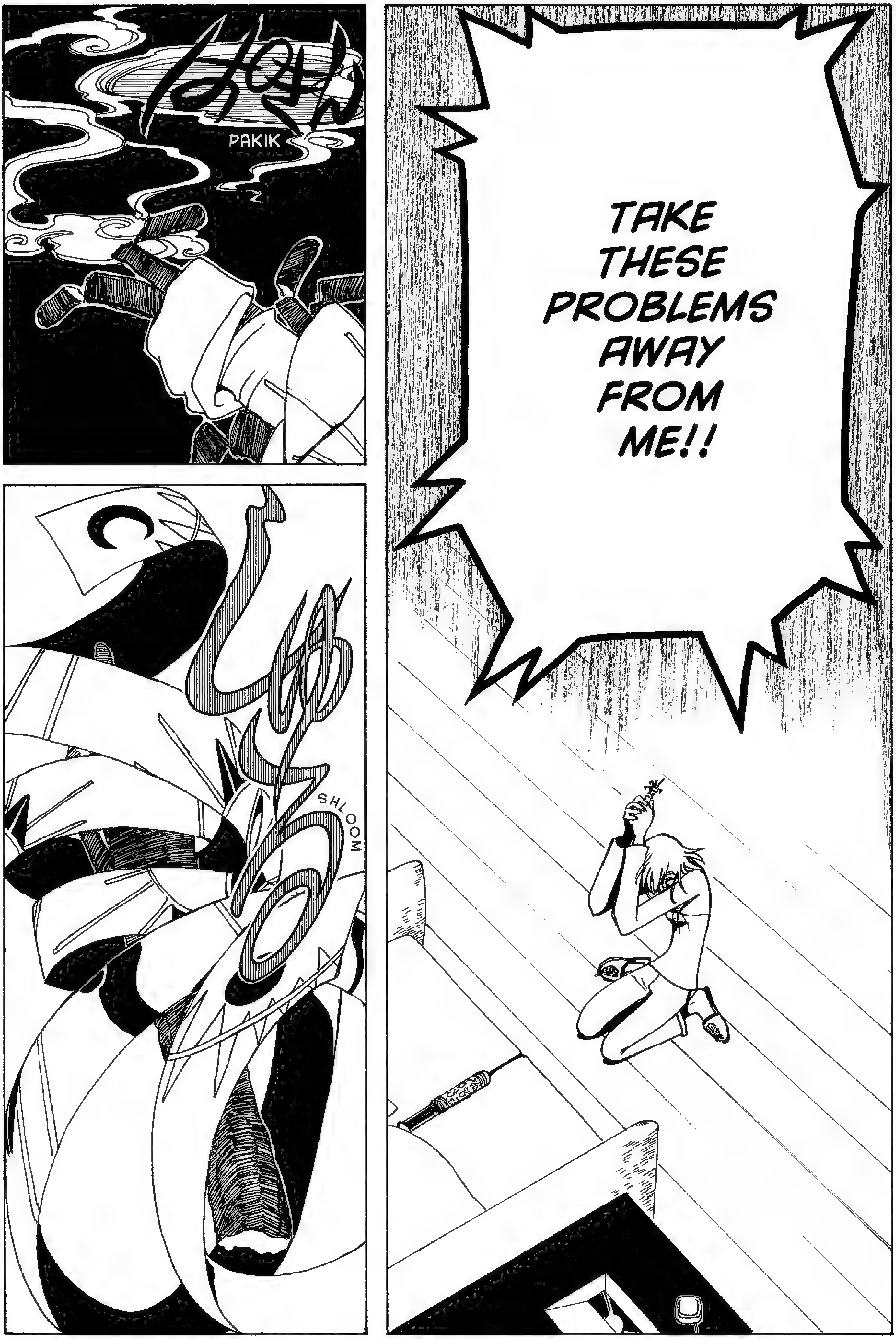
GAK!
SHE'S DIFFERENT TODAY.
AND I DOUBT THAT IT'S SIMPLY BECAUSE TODAY IS THE LAST DAY OF TRAINING.

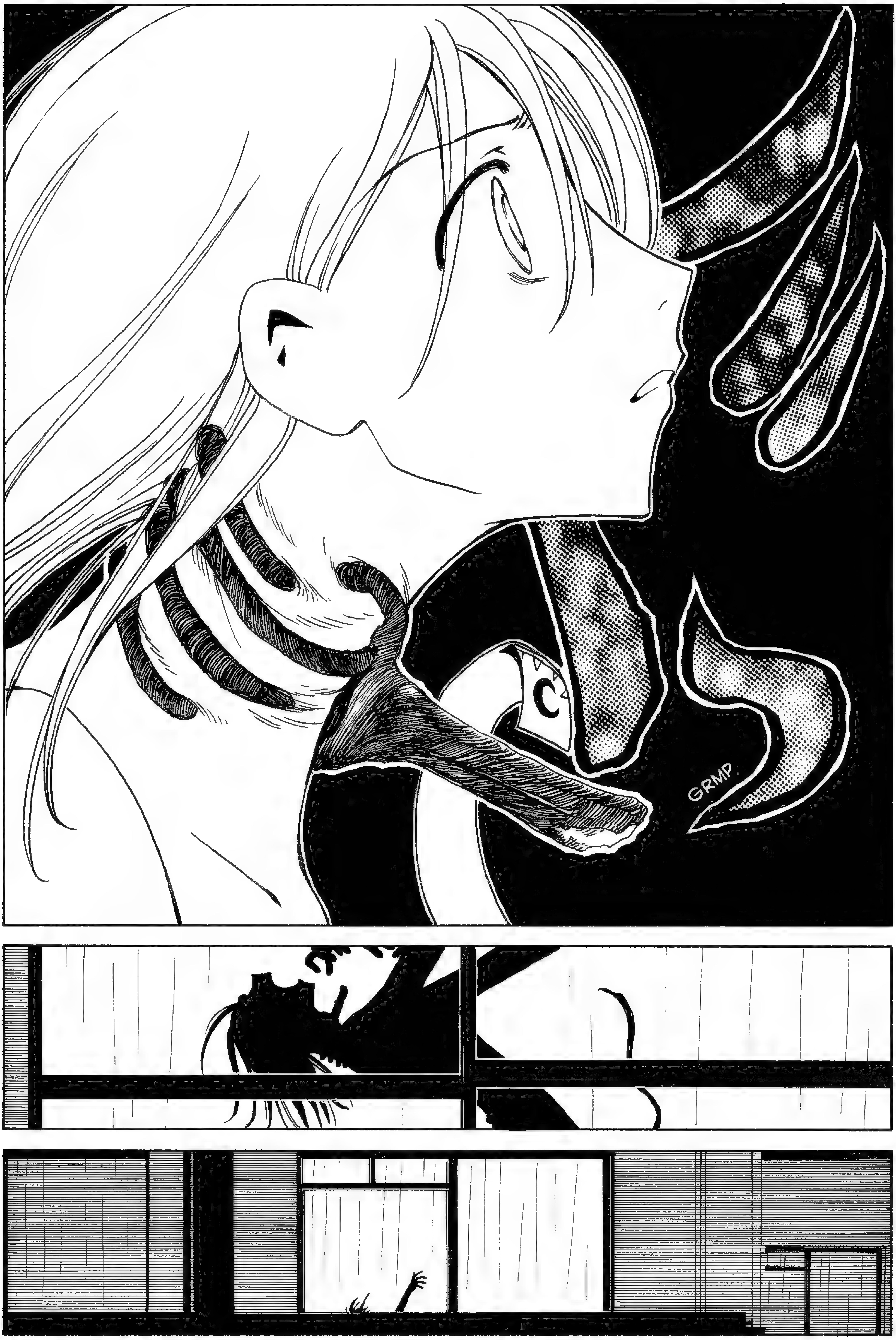

IT ONLY HAS ONE FINGER LEFT!
I JUST HAD A PASSING THOUGHT, BUT IT TOOK IT AS A WISH!
RRRRING
WHOOSH
ぱっ
HELLO?
..... PROFESSOR!
EH?!
W-WAIT JUST A SECOND!
Y-YES... I *WAS* IN THE LIBRARY THAT DAY...
...AND I MET WITH SOME FRIENDS FROM CLASS...
BUT I NEVER STOLE RESEARCH MATERIALS FROM ANYONE!
I NEVER *STOLE* ANYTHING IN MY LIFE!

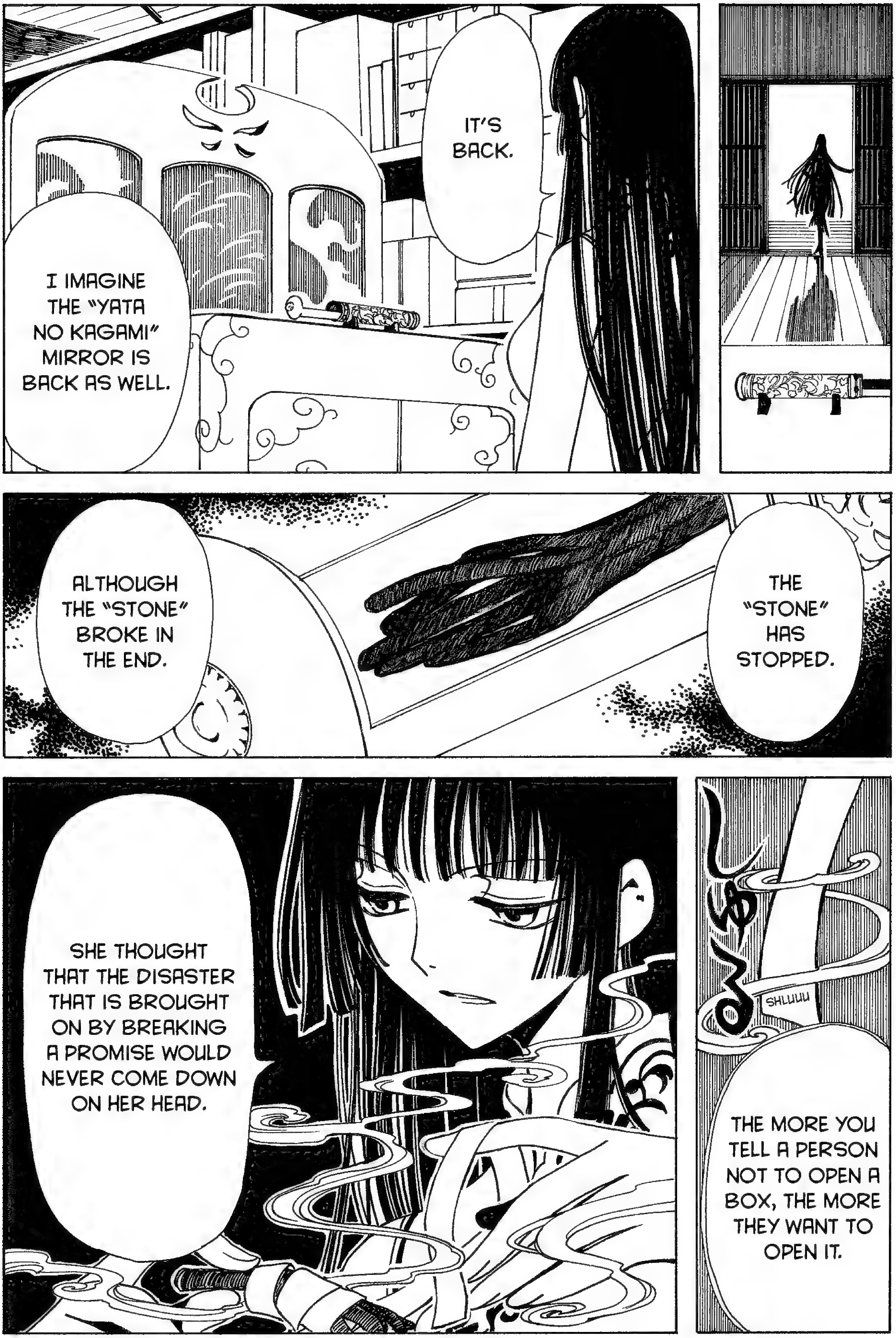

YOU'RE SAYING THAT THE PERSON WHOSE DATA GOT STOLEN WAS IN THE LIBRARY AT THE TIME?
HOW DID I COME UP WITH MY CLASS EXERCISES...?
カタ SHVR
カタ SHVR
A BOOK!
I SAW THEM IN A BOOK!
..... EH?
YOU MEAN THOSE SAME EXERCISES WERE MADE UP BY THE GRANDFATHER OF THAT STUDENT?
...AND THERE'S NO WAY SOMEONE ELSE WOULD KNOW?


WAIT A SECOND, PROFESSOR!
I WAS JUST—
JEEEET
JEEEET
JEEEET
JEEEET
JEEEET
JEEEET
I WONDER IF THEY'RE GOING TO THINK THAT THE GUY WHO FELL ONTO THE TRACKS TODAY WAS MY FAULT!
JEEEET
JEEEET
I WAS STANDING NEXT TO HIM...
MAYBE SOMEBODY THINKS I PUSHED HIM...
JEEEET
JEEEET
JEEEET
DING DONG
THE POLICE...

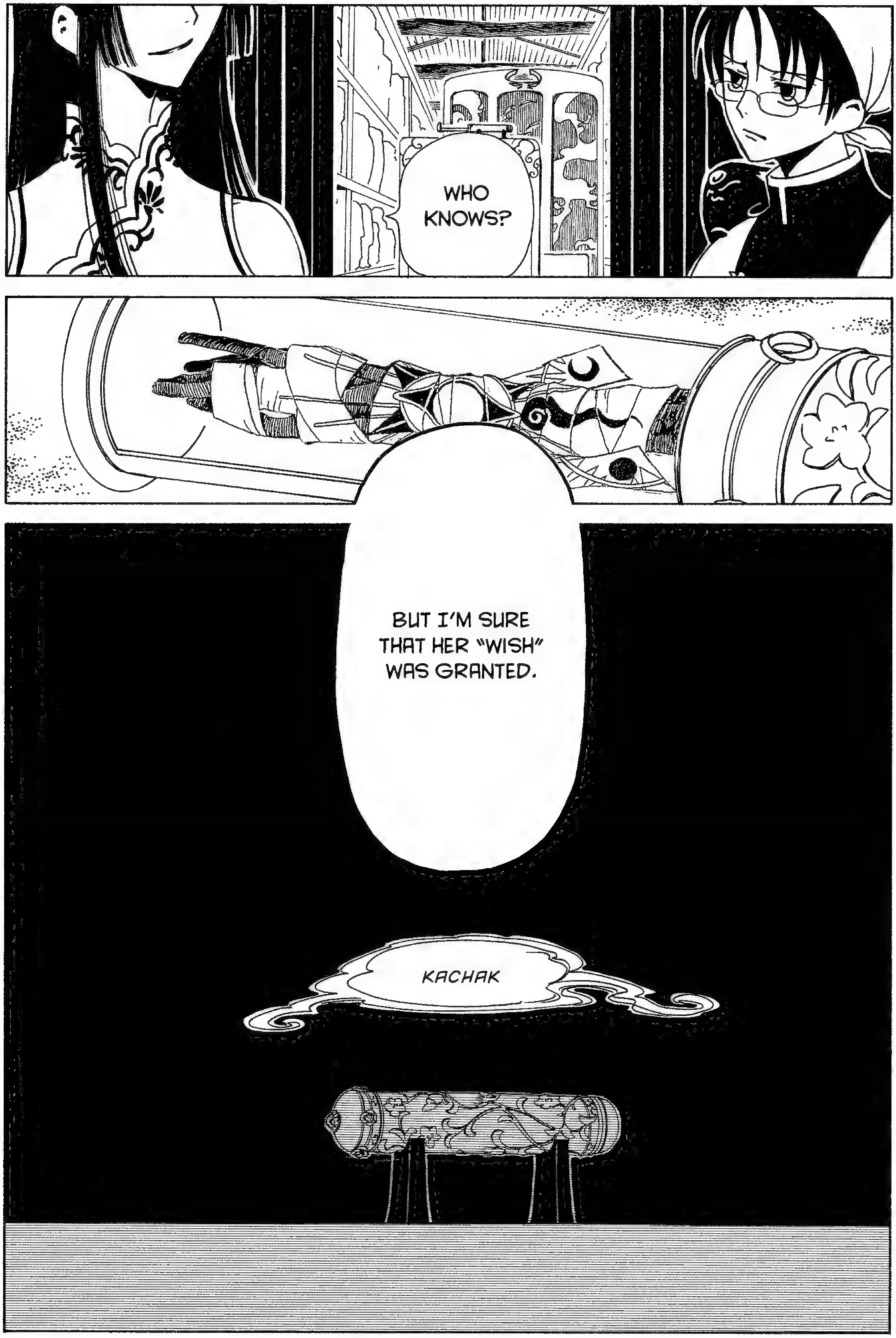

DING DONG
DING DONG
KLATTR
DING DONG
DING DONG
I CAN'T STAND THIS ANYMORE!
DING DONG
MAKE THIS RIGHT!
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!
DING DONG


TAKE THESE PROBLEMS AWAY FROM ME!!
PAKIK
SHLOOM

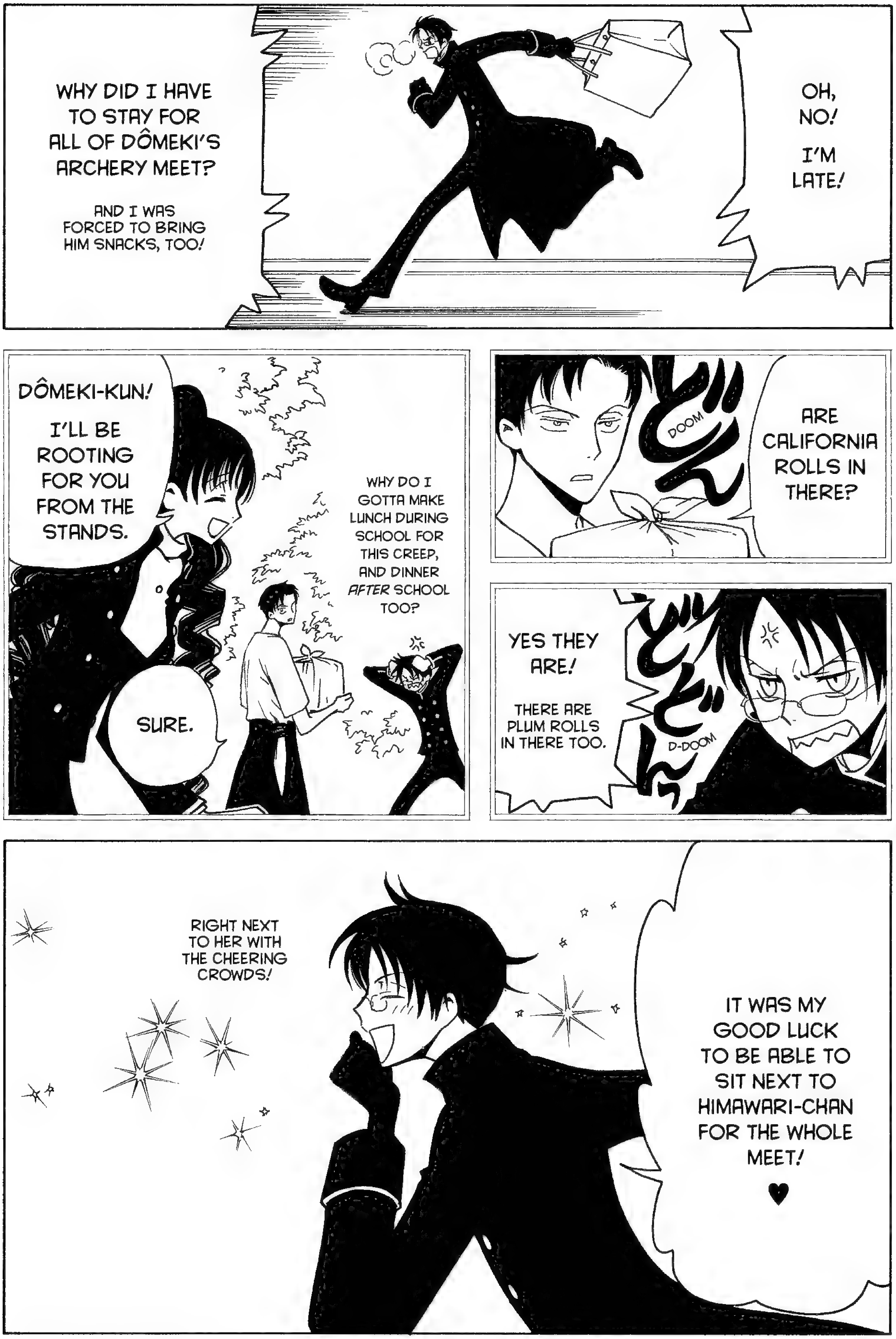

GRMP.

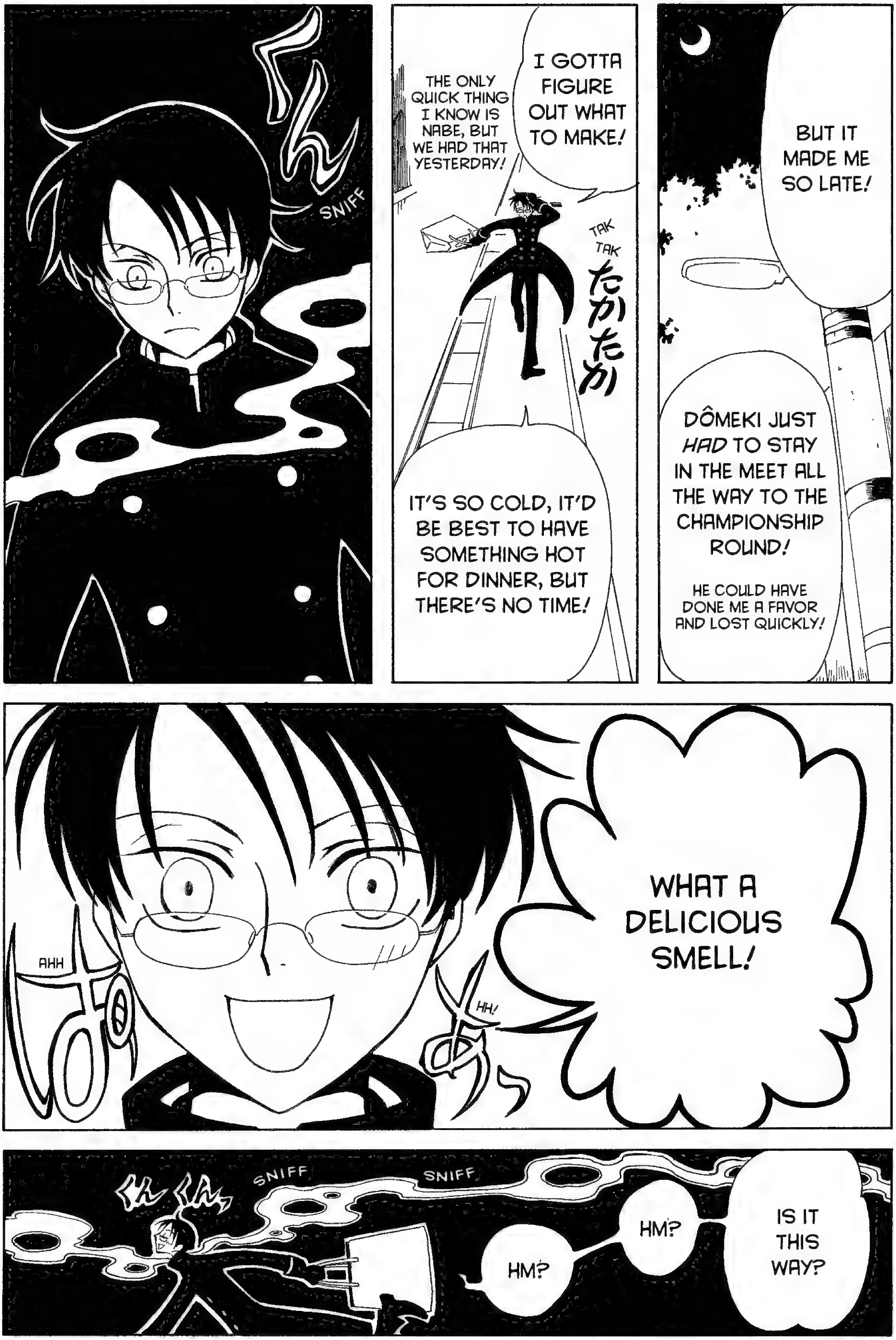

IT'S BACK.
I IMAGINE THE "YATA NO KAGAMI" MIRROR IS BACK AS WELL.
THE "STONE" HAS STOPPED.
ALTHOUGH THE "STONE" BROKE IN THE END.
しゅる
SHLUUU
THE MORE YOU TELL A PERSON NOT TO OPEN A BOX, THE MORE THEY WANT TO OPEN IT.
SHE THOUGHT THAT THE DISASTER THAT IS BROUGHT ON BY BREAKING A PROMISE WOULD NEVER COME DOWN ON HER HEAD.

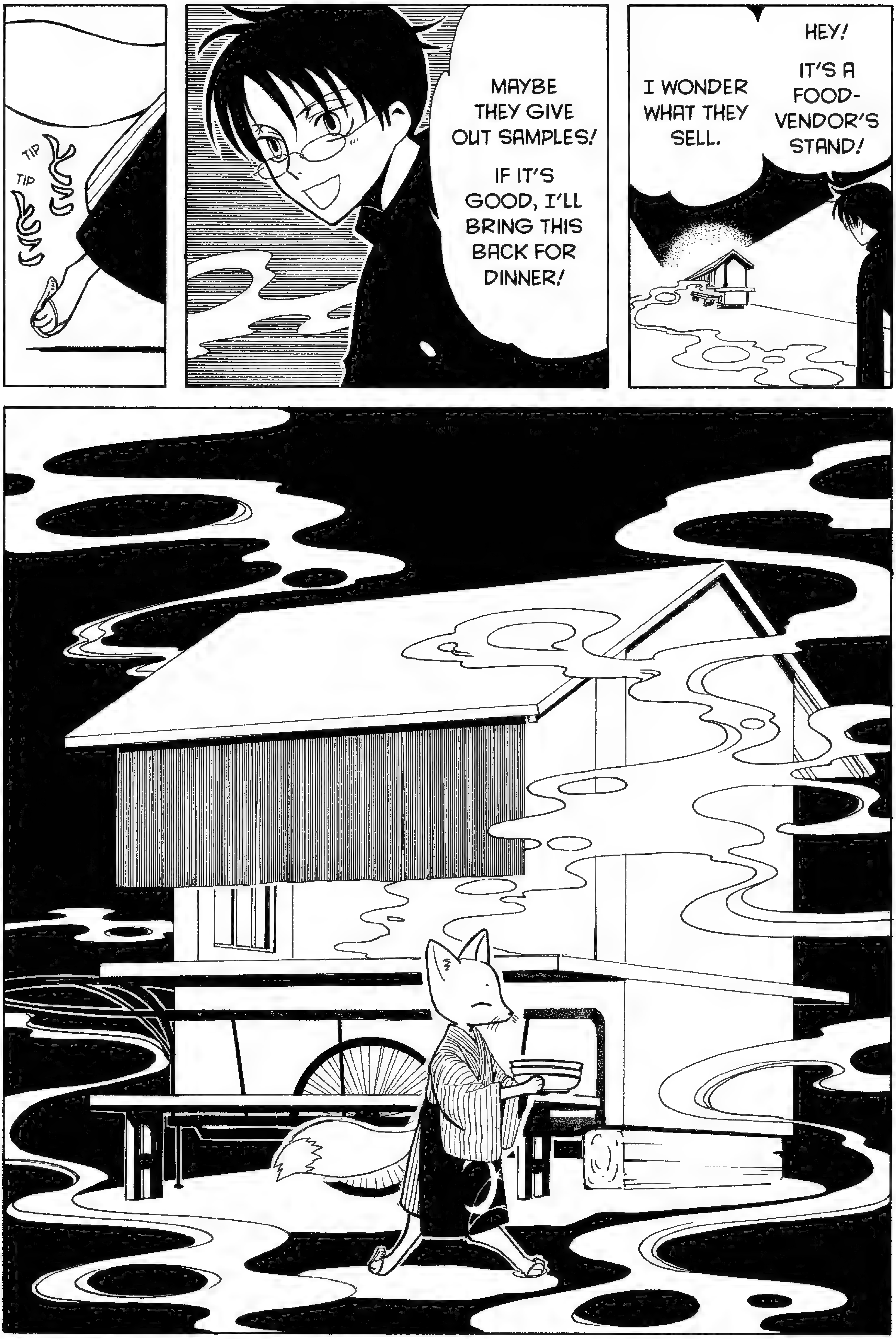
NO ONE CAN CONSIDER THEMSELVES SPECIAL.
YÛKO-SAN! THE PASTA IS READY! AND THE WHITE WINE IS CHILLED!
WONDERFUL! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
KLUNK
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT EDUCATIONAL TRAINING STUDENT.

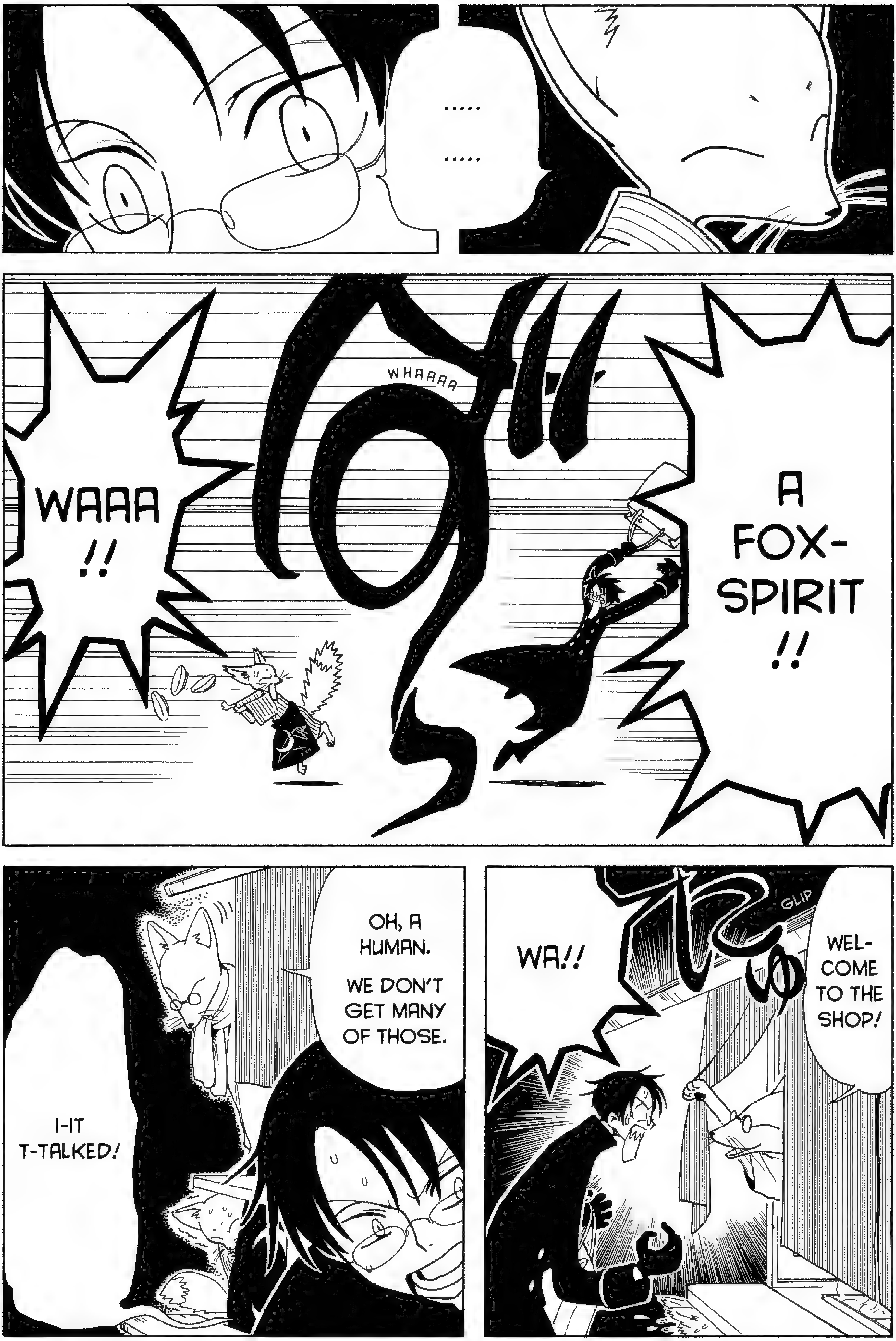

WHO KNOWS?
BUT I'M SURE THAT HER "WISH" WAS GRANTED.
KACHAK

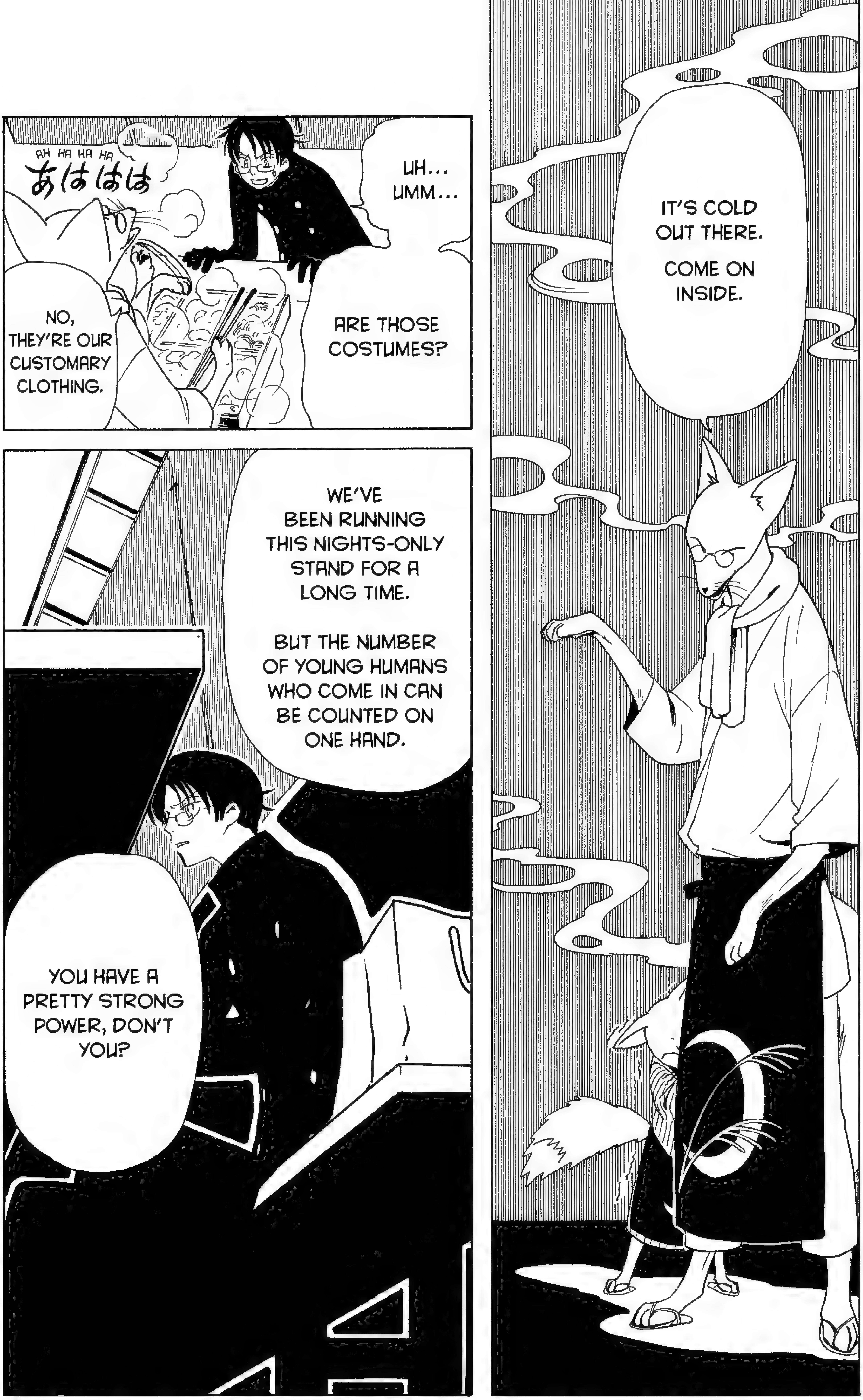
xxxHOLiC
～×××ホリック～

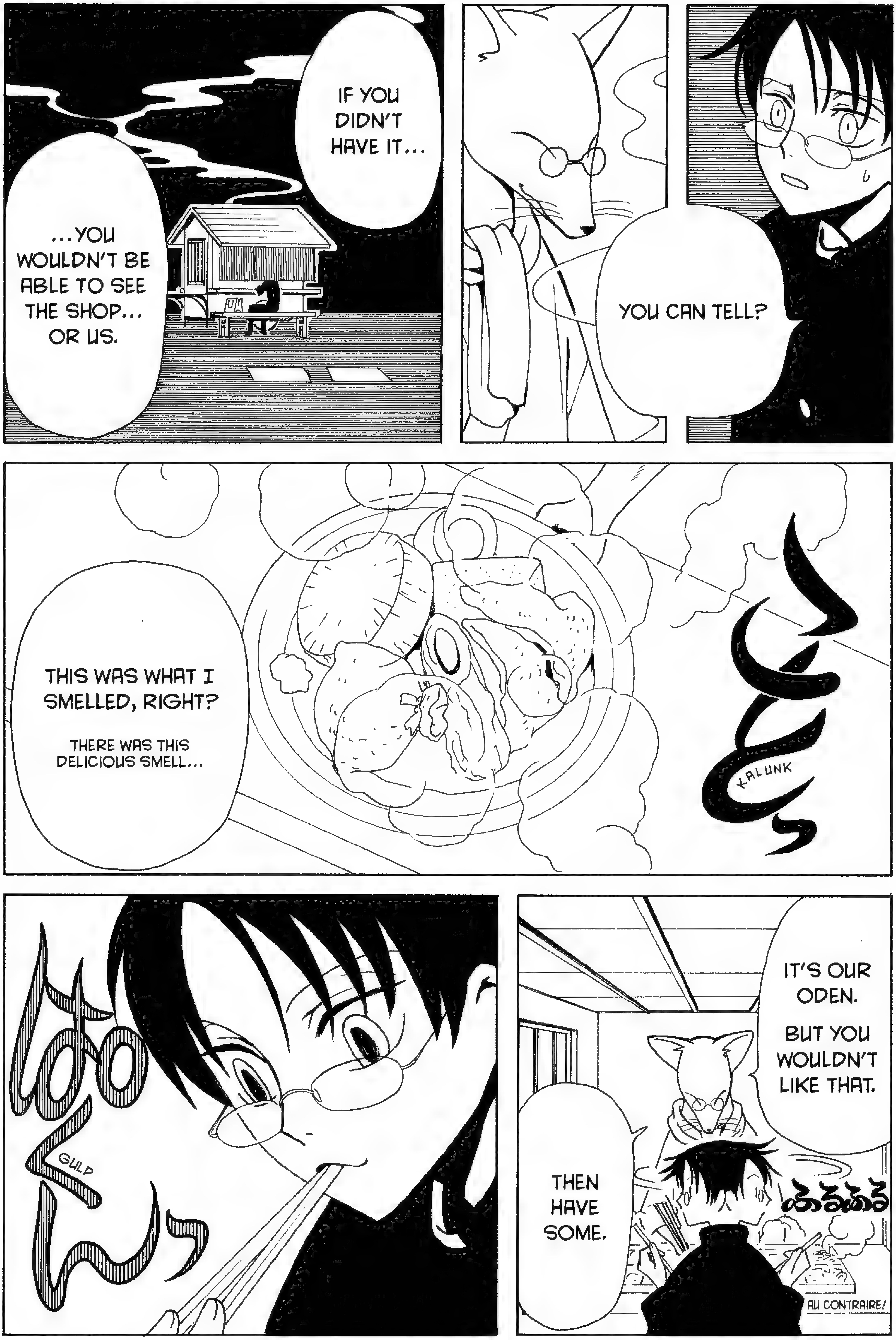

OH, NO! I'M LATE!
WHY DID I HAVE TO STAY FOR ALL OF DÔMEKI'S ARCHERY MEET?
AND I WAS FORCED TO BRING HIM SNACKS, TOO!
ARE CALIFORNIA ROLLS IN THERE?
DOOM
YES THEY ARE!
THERE ARE PLUM ROLLS IN THERE TOO.
D-DOOM
DÔMEKI-KUN! I'LL BE ROOTING FOR YOU FROM THE STANDS.
SURE.
WHY DO I GOTTA MAKE LUNCH DURING SCHOOL FOR THIS CREEP, AND DINNER *AFTER* SCHOOL TOO?
IT WAS MY GOOD LUCK TO BE ABLE TO SIT NEXT TO HIMAWARI-CHAN FOR THE WHOLE MEET! ♥
RIGHT NEXT TO HER WITH THE CHEERING CROWDS!

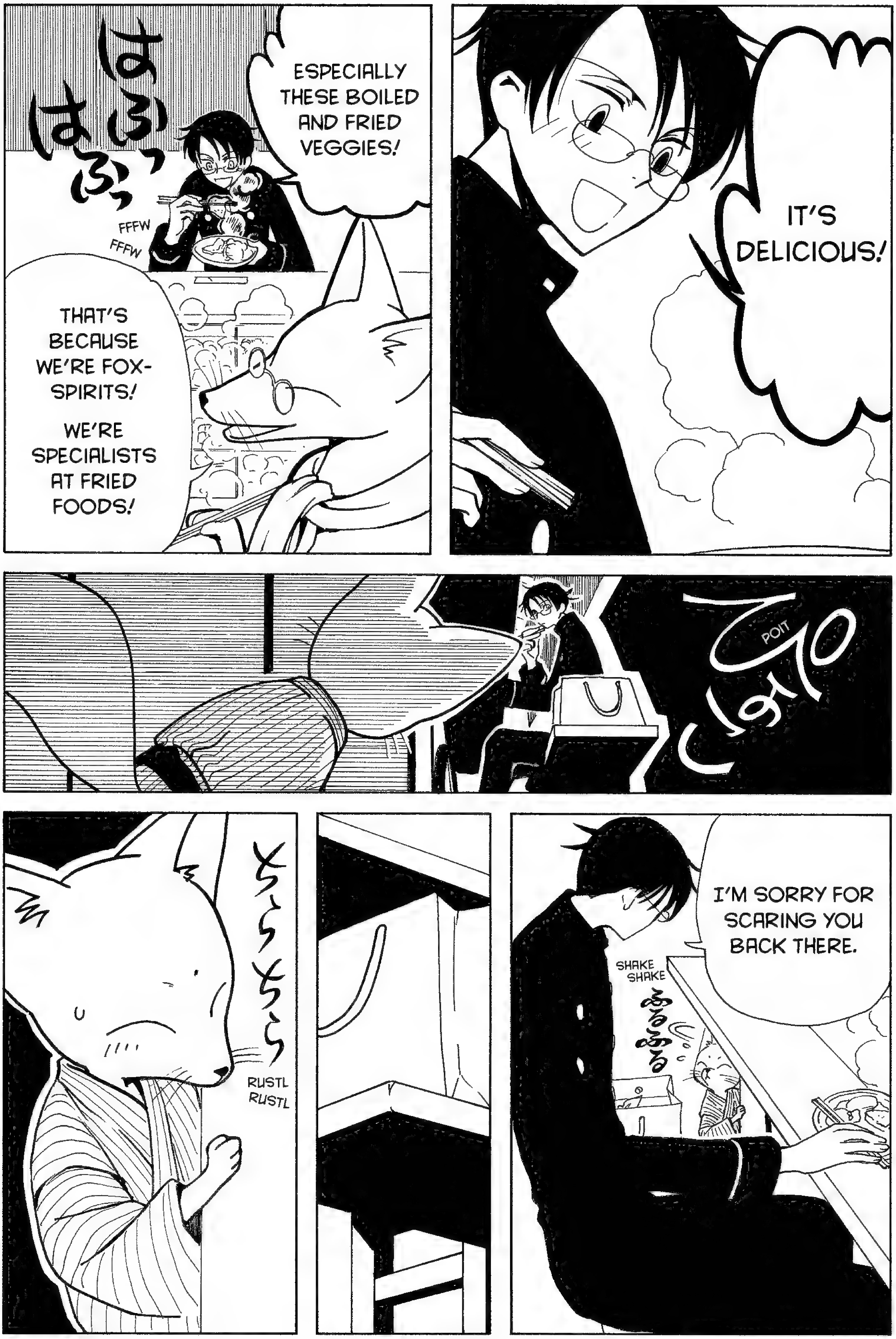

BUT IT MADE ME SO LATE!
DÔMEKI JUST *HAD* TO STAY IN THE MEET ALL THE WAY TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND!
HE COULD HAVE DONE ME A FAVOR AND LOST QUICKLY!
I GOTTA FIGURE OUT WHAT TO MAKE!
THE ONLY QUICK THING I KNOW IS NABE, BUT WE HAD THAT YESTERDAY!
TAK TAK
たかたか
IT'S SO COLD, IT'D BE BEST TO HAVE SOMETHING HOT FOR DINNER, BUT THERE'S NO TIME!
SNIFF
WHAT A DELICIOUS SMELL!
HH!
AHH
IS IT THIS WAY?
HM?
HM?
SNIFF
SNIFF
くんくん

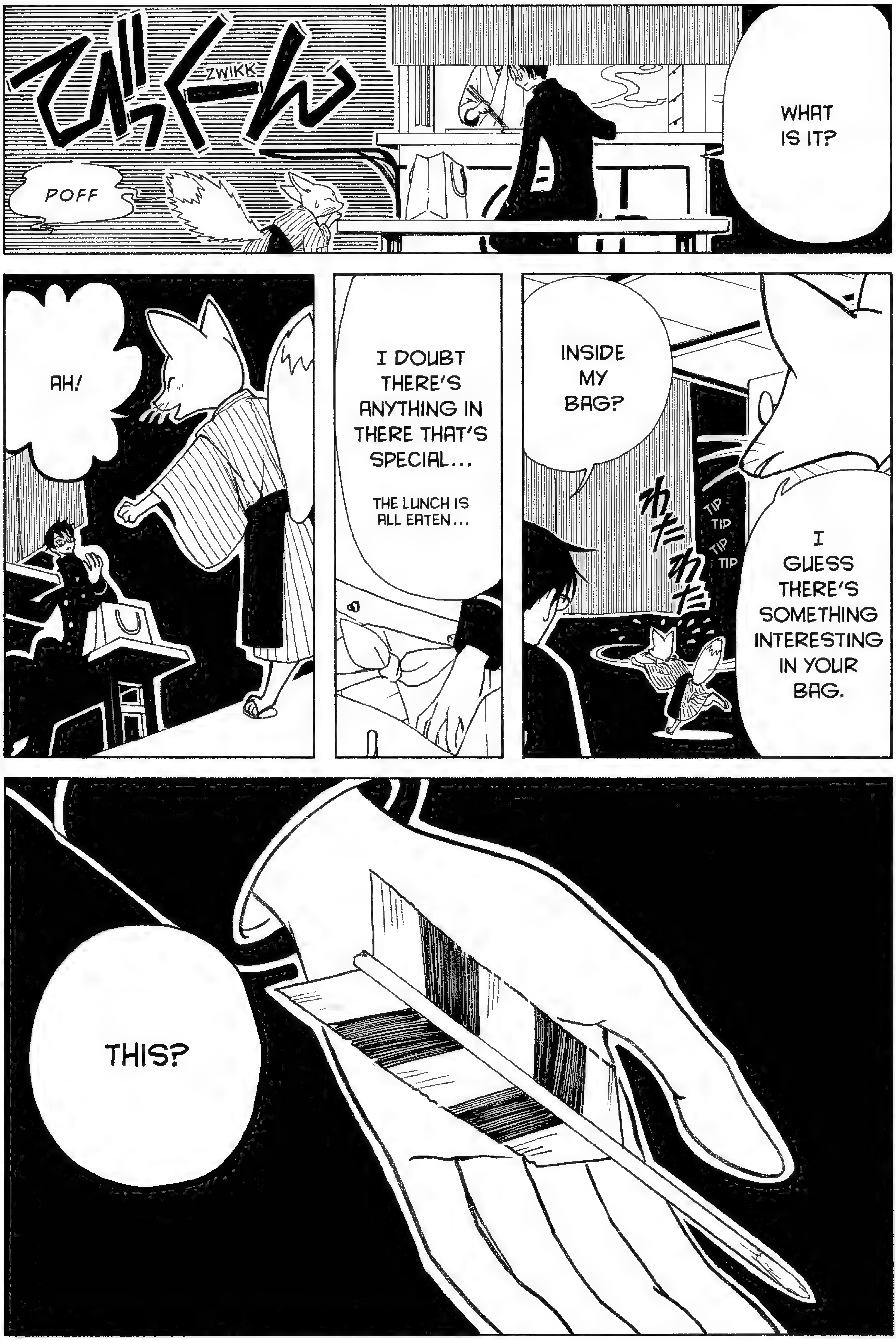

HEY!
IT'S A FOOD-VENDOR'S STAND!
I WONDER WHAT THEY SELL.
MAYBE THEY GIVE OUT SAMPLES!
IF IT'S GOOD, I'LL BRING THIS BACK FOR DINNER!
TIP
TIP

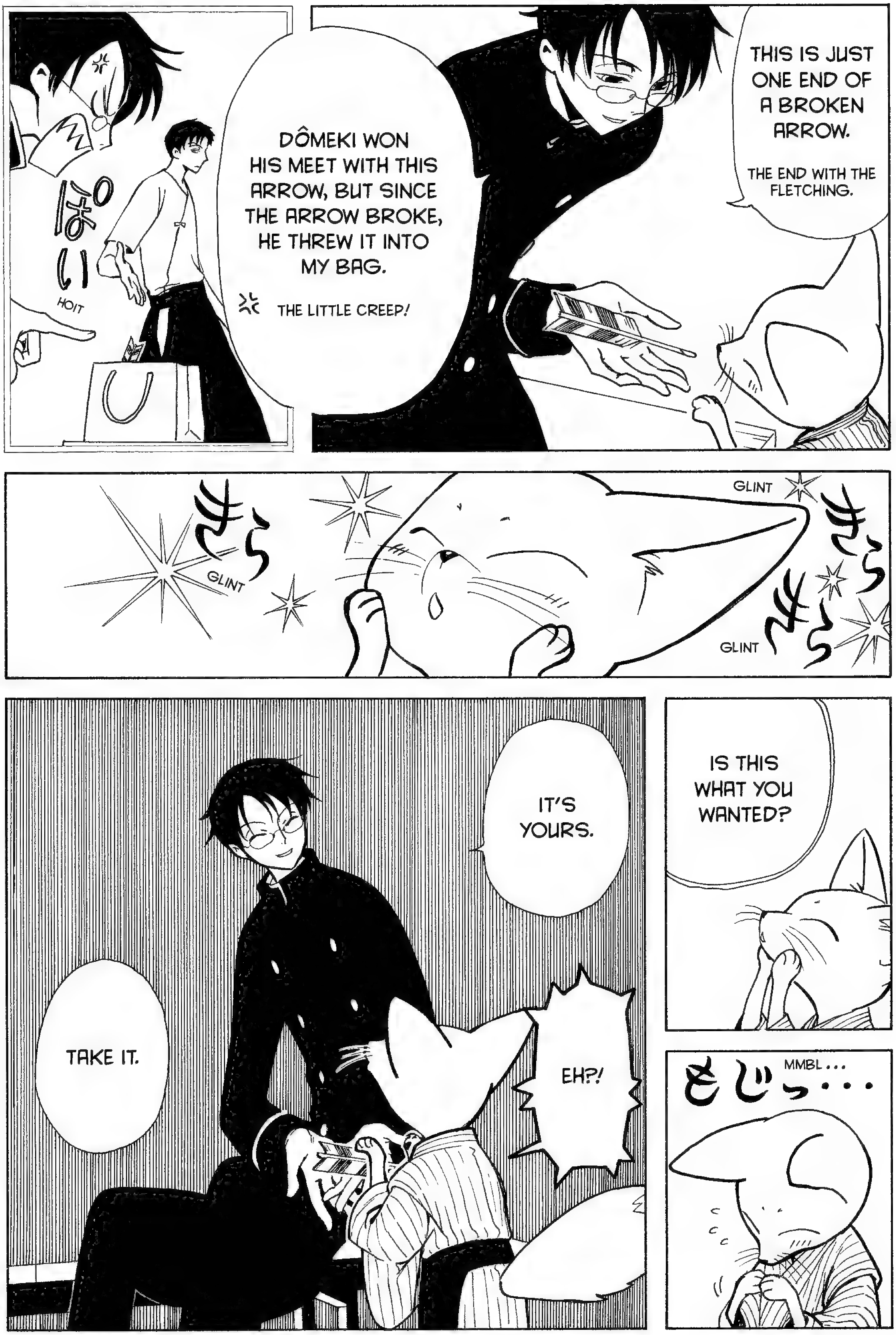

.....
.....
A FOX-SPIRIT!!
WHAAAA
WAAA!!
WELCOME TO THE SHOP!
GLIP
WA!!
OH, A HUMAN.
WE DON'T GET MANY OF THOSE.
I-IT T-TALKED!

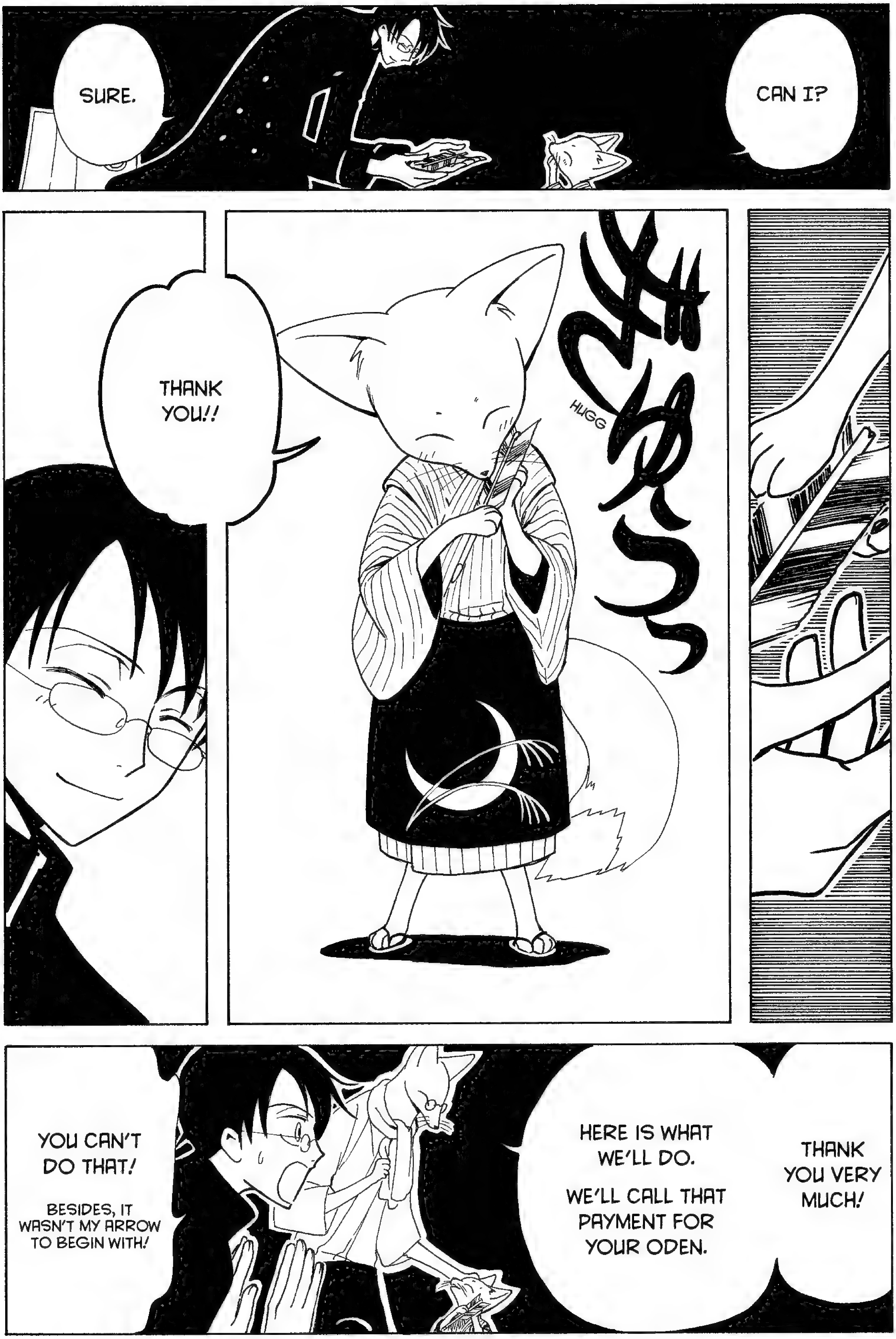

IT'S COLD OUT THERE.
COME ON INSIDE.
UH... UMM...
ARE THOSE COSTUMES?
AH HA HA HA
あははは
NO, THEY'RE OUR CUSTOMARY CLOTHING.
WE'VE BEEN RUNNING THIS NIGHTS-ONLY STAND FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT THE NUMBER OF YOUNG HUMANS WHO COME IN CAN BE COUNTED ON ONE HAND.
YOU HAVE A PRETTY STRONG POWER, DON'T YOU?

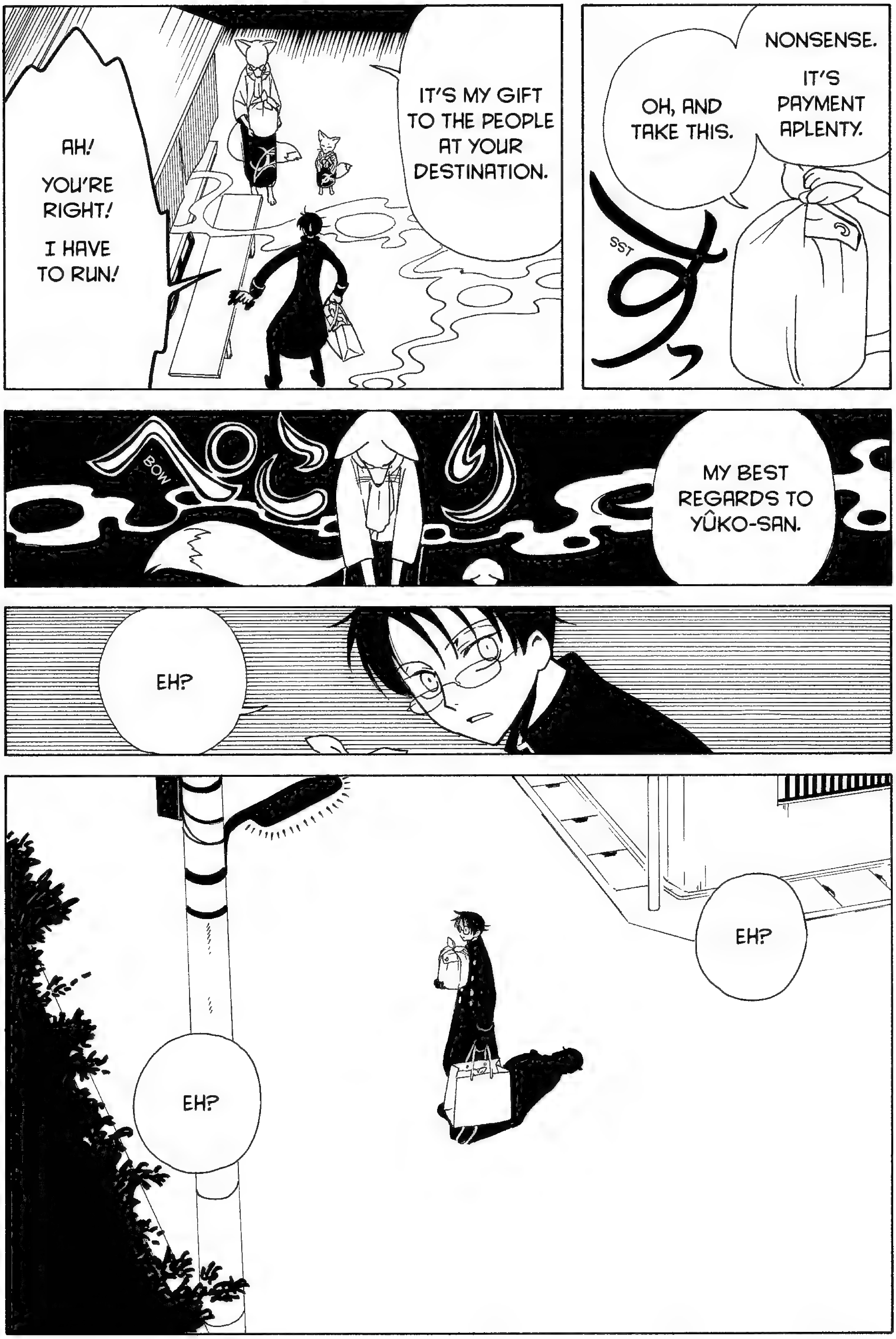

YOU CAN TELL?
IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE IT...
...YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SEE THE SHOP... OR US.
KALUNK
THIS WAS WHAT I SMELLED, RIGHT?
THERE WAS THIS DELICIOUS SMELL...
IT'S OUR ODEN.
BUT YOU WOULDN'T LIKE THAT.
ふるふる
AU CONTRAIRE!
THEN HAVE SOME.
GULP

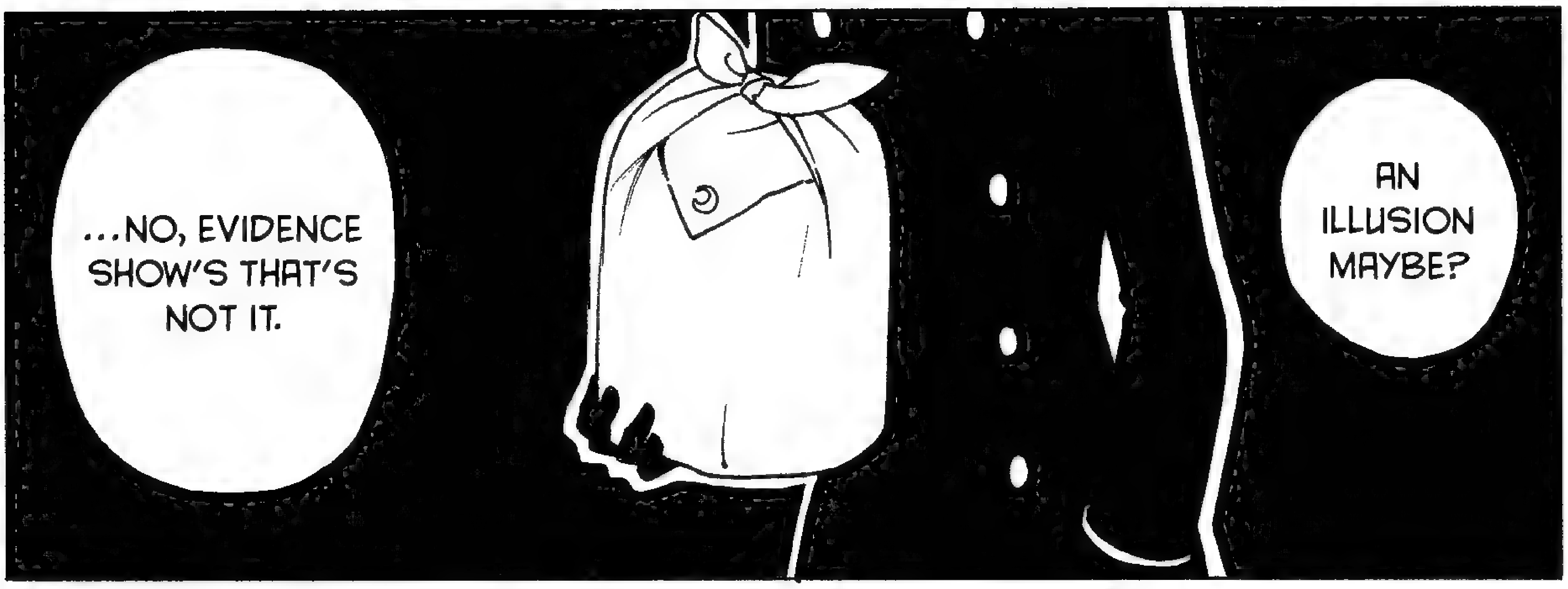

IT'S DELICIOUS!
ESPECIALLY THESE BOILED AND FRIED VEGGIES!
はふっはふっ
FFFW FFFW
THAT'S BECAUSE WE'RE FOX-SPIRITS!
WE'RE SPECIALISTS AT FRIED FOODS!
ぽい
POIT
I'M SORRY FOR SCARING YOU BACK THERE.
ふるふる
SHAKE SHAKE
ちらちら
RUSTL RUSTL

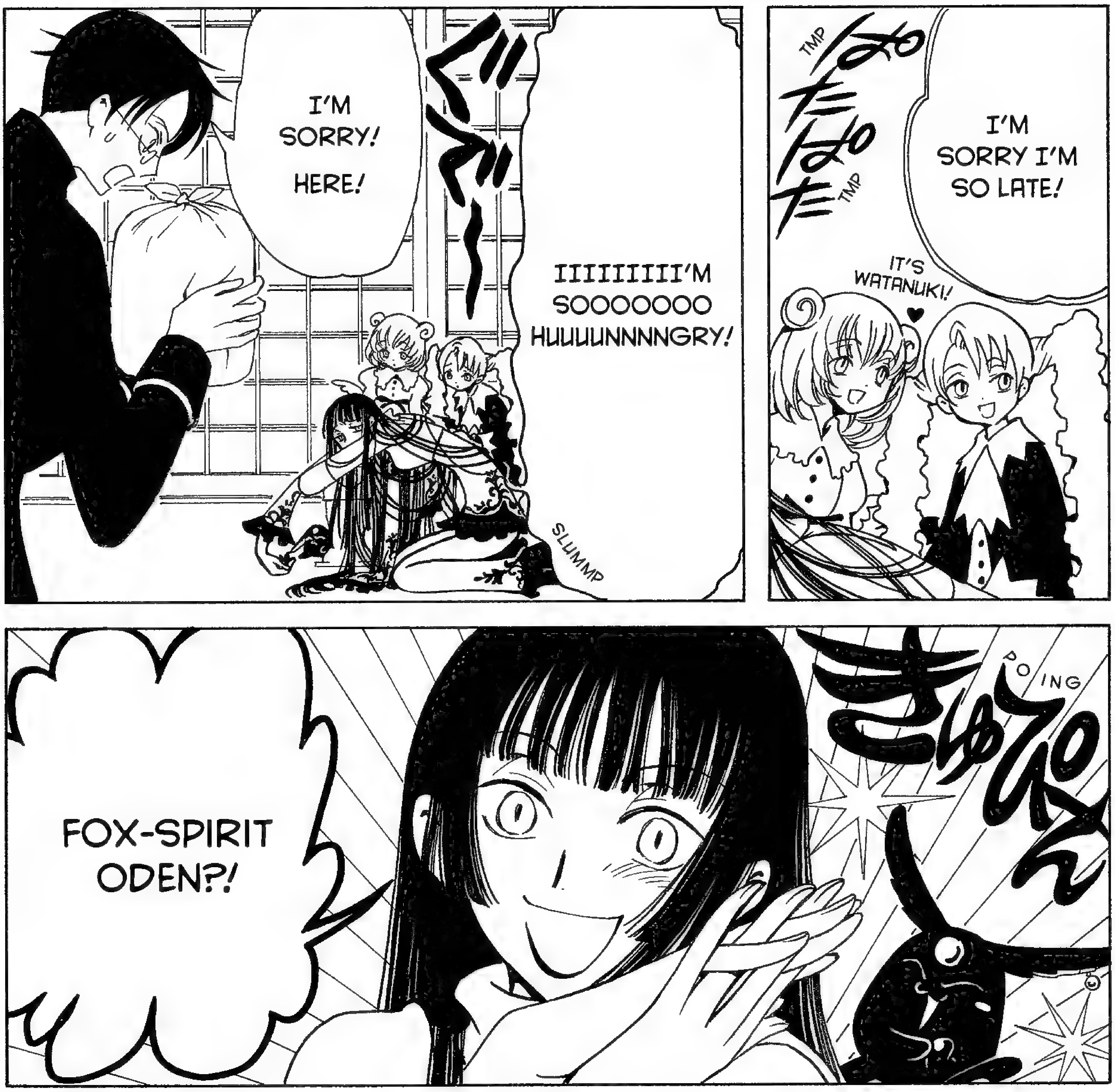

WHAT IS IT?
びっくーん
ZWIKK
POFF
I GUESS THERE'S SOMETHING INTERESTING IN YOUR BAG.
わたわた
TIP TIP TIP TIP
INSIDE MY BAG?
I DOUBT THERE'S ANYTHING IN THERE THAT'S SPECIAL...
THE LUNCH IS ALL EATEN...
AH!
THIS?

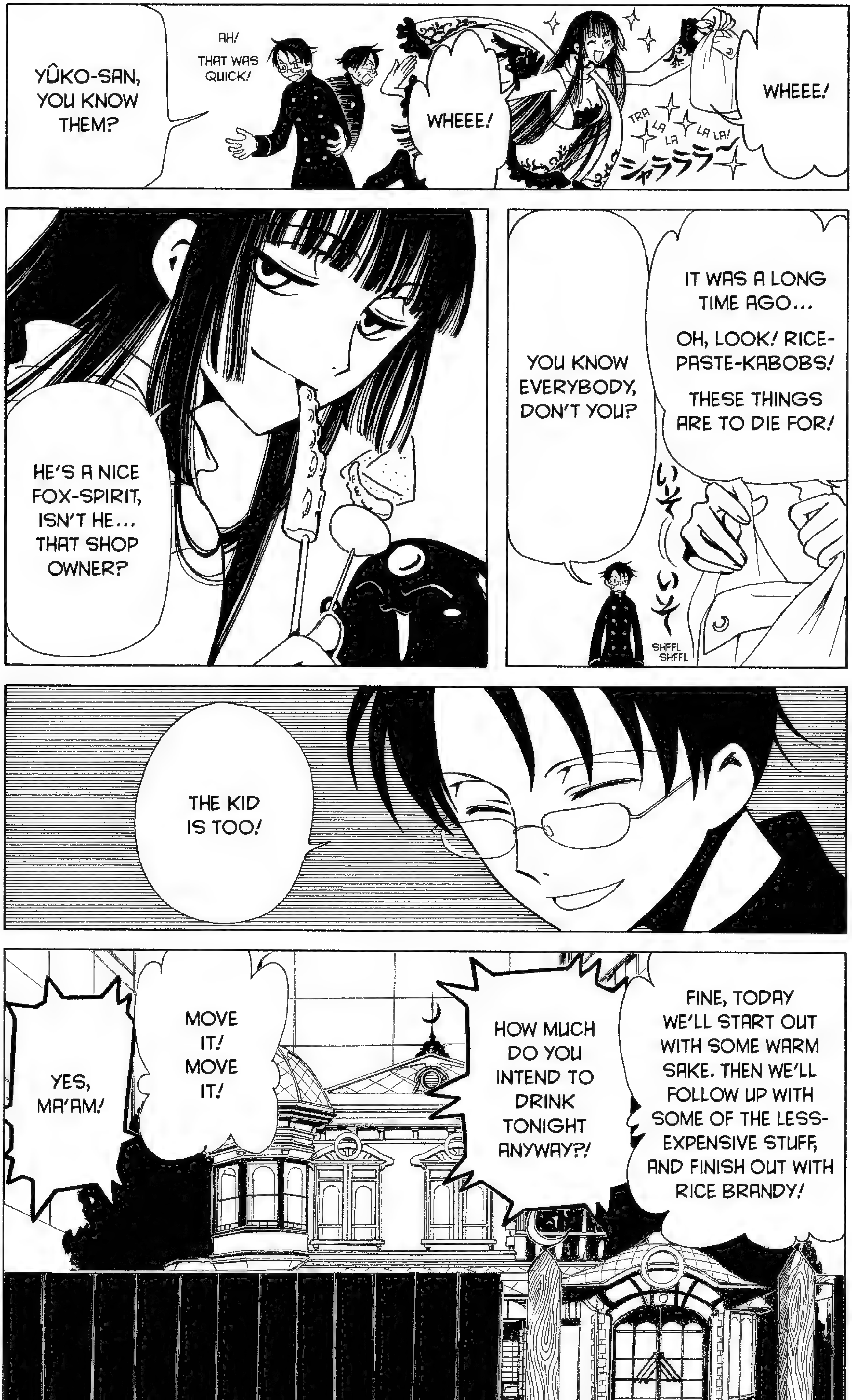

THIS IS JUST ONE END OF A BROKEN ARROW.
THE END WITH THE FLETCHING.
DÔMEKI WON HIS MEET WITH THIS ARROW, BUT SINCE THE ARROW BROKE, HE THREW IT INTO MY BAG.
THE LITTLE CREEP!
ぽい
HOIT
きら
GLINT
きら
きら
GLINT
きら
GLINT
IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?
とじっ・・・
MMBL...
IT'S YOURS.
EH?!
TAKE IT.


CAN I?
SURE.
HUGG
THANK YOU!!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
HERE IS WHAT WE'LL DO.
WE'LL CALL THAT PAYMENT FOR YOUR ODEN.
YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
BESIDES, IT WASN'T MY ARROW TO BEGIN WITH!


NONSENSE.
IT'S PAYMENT APLENTY.
OH, AND TAKE THIS.
SST
IT'S MY GIFT TO THE PEOPLE AT YOUR DESTINATION.
AH! YOU'RE RIGHT! I HAVE TO RUN!
MY BEST REGARDS TO YÛKO-SAN.
BOW
EH?
EH?
EH?

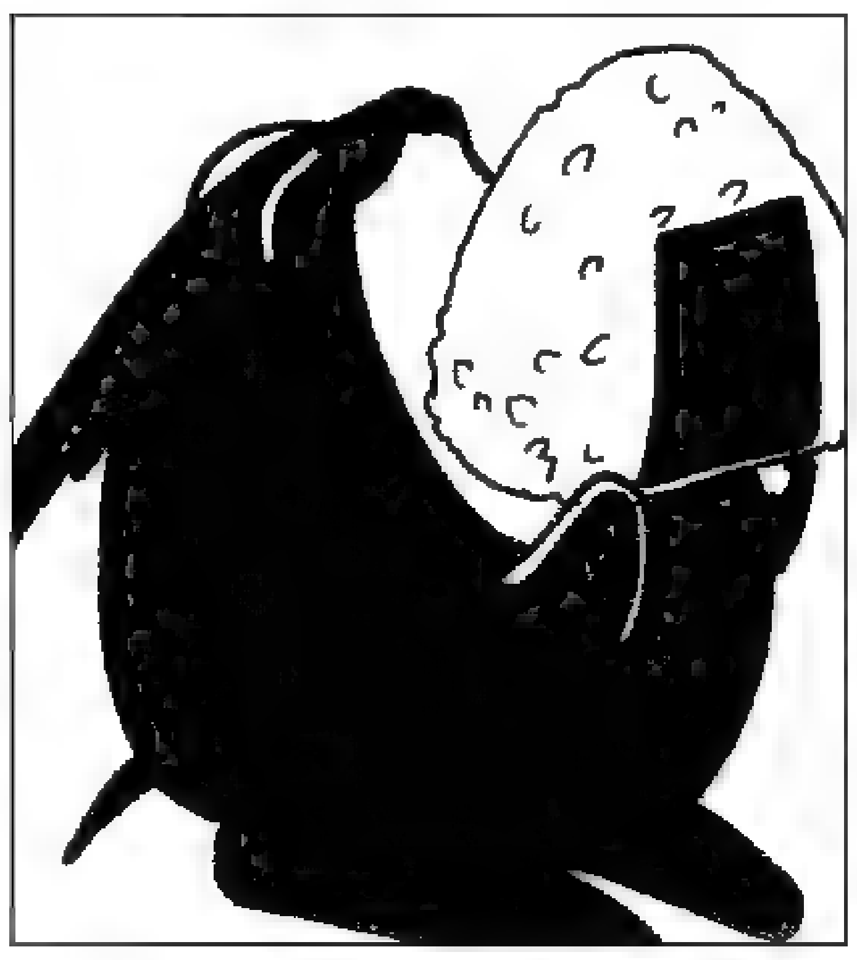

AN ILLUSION MAYBE?
...NO, EVIDENCE SHOW'S THAT'S NOT IT.


ぱたぱた
TMP TMP
I'M SORRY I'M SO LATE!
IT'S WATANUKI!
ぐでーー
IIIIIIIII'M SOOOOOOO HUUUUNNNNGRY!
SLUMMP
I'M SORRY! HERE!
きゅぴーん
POING
FOX-SPIRIT ODEN?!


WHEEE!
TRA LA LA LA LA!
シャラララ~
WHEEE!
AH! THAT WAS QUICK!
YÛKO-SAN, YOU KNOW THEM?
IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO... OH, LOOK! RICE-PASTE-KABOBS! THESE THINGS ARE TO DIE FOR!
YOU KNOW EVERYBODY, DON'T YOU?
いそいそ
SHFFL SHFFL
HE'S A NICE FOX-SPIRIT, ISN'T HE... THAT SHOP OWNER?
THE KID IS TOO!
FINE, TODAY WE'LL START OUT WITH SOME WARM SAKE. THEN WE'LL FOLLOW UP WITH SOME OF THE LESS-EXPENSIVE STUFF, AND FINISH OUT WITH RICE BRANDY!
HOW MUCH DO YOU INTEND TO DRINK TONIGHT ANYWAY?!
MOVE IT! MOVE IT!
YES, MA'AM!

Translation Notes

For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes to help you understand some of the cultural and story references from our translation of *xxxHOLiC*.

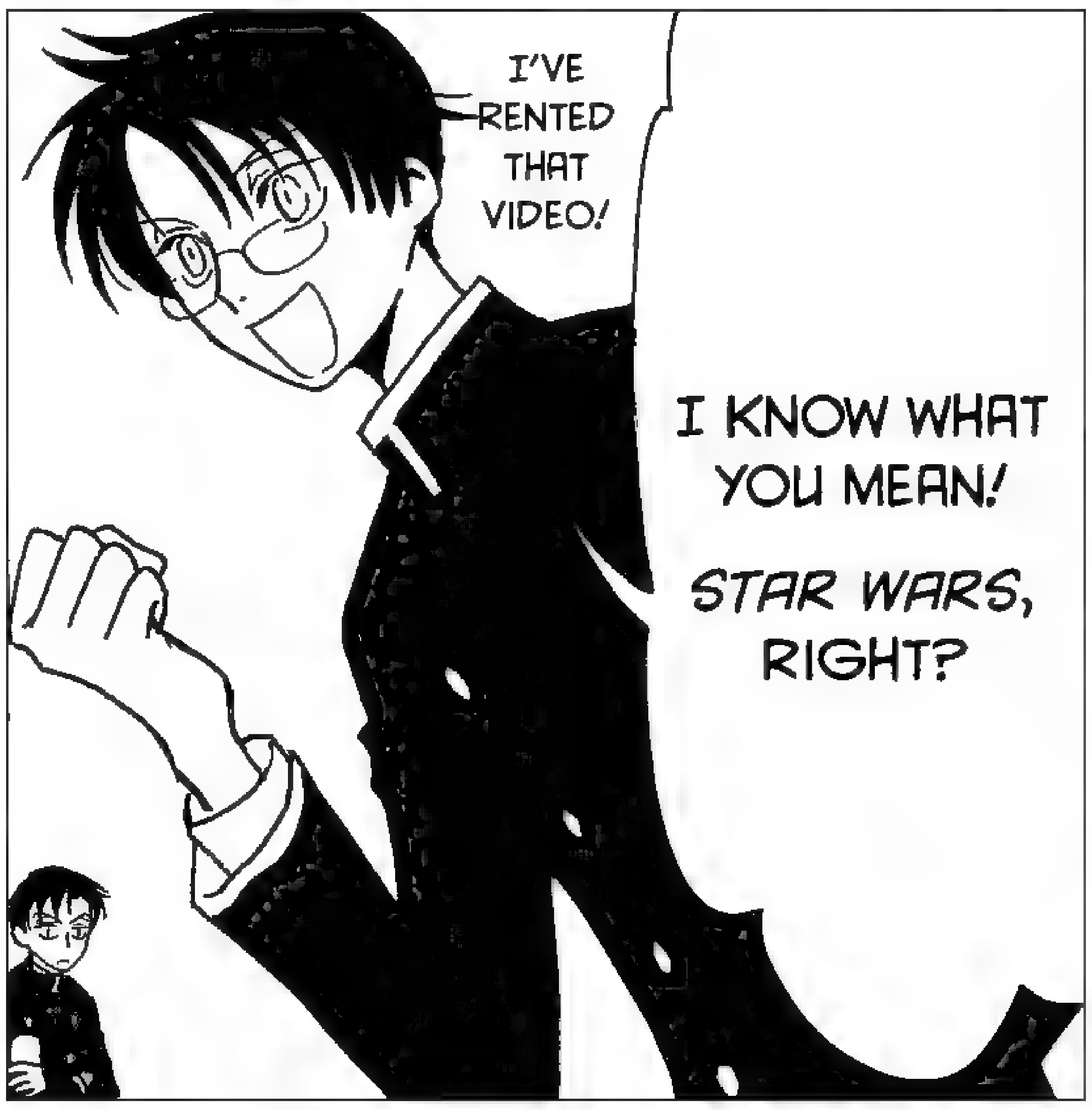


Onigiri (Rice balls)

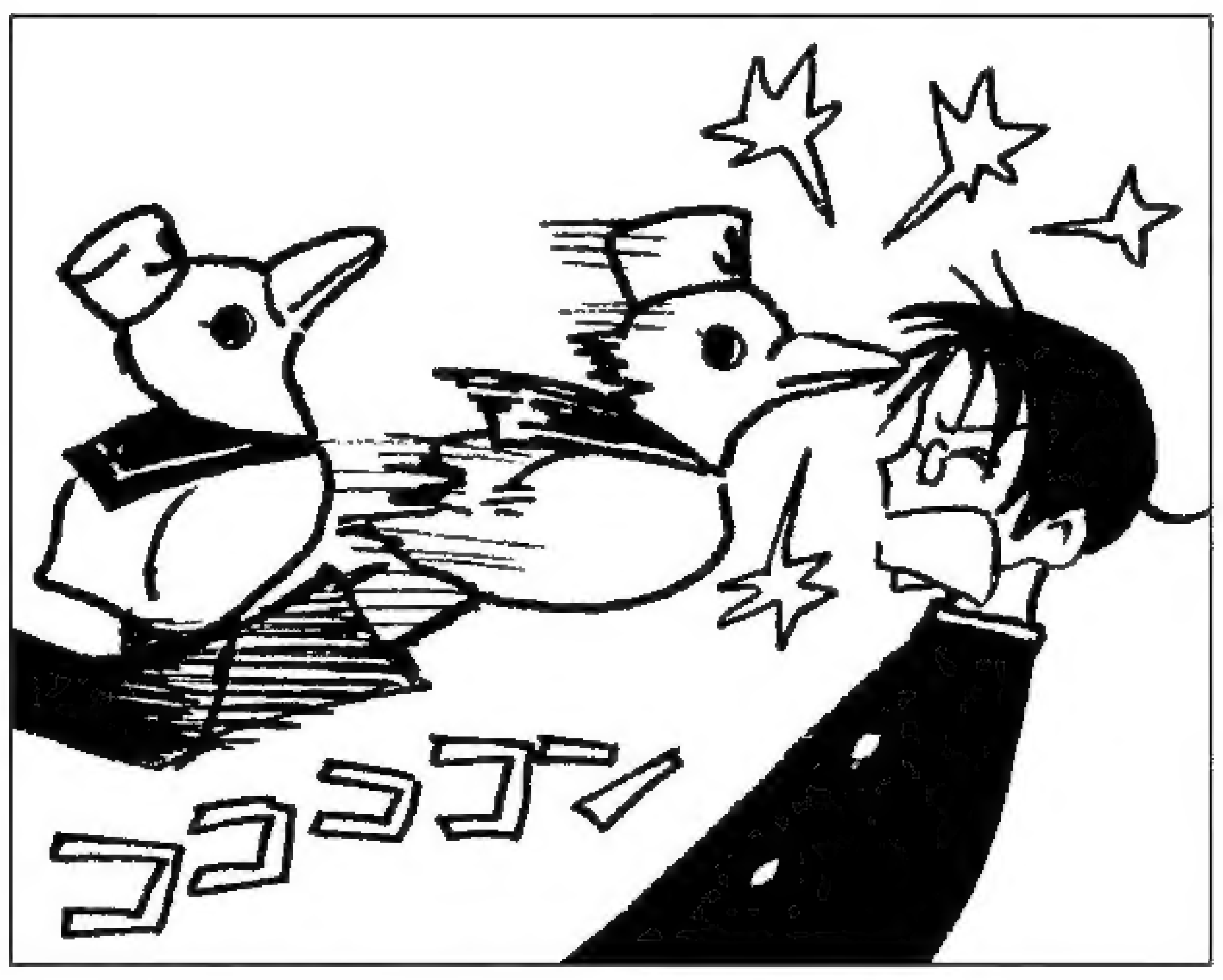
In Japan, when you say lunch away from home, you say *onigiri*. Usually made by mother but available at any grocery store, convenience store, or food kiosk, this is as much a staple of the Japanese lunchbox as sandwiches in the United States. It is made from a triangle of sticky rice and a seaweed wrapper for holding, and although it may consist of just rice and seaweed, it sometimes includes a filling in the center such as grilled salmon or a sour pickled plum (*umeboshi*).

Star Wars

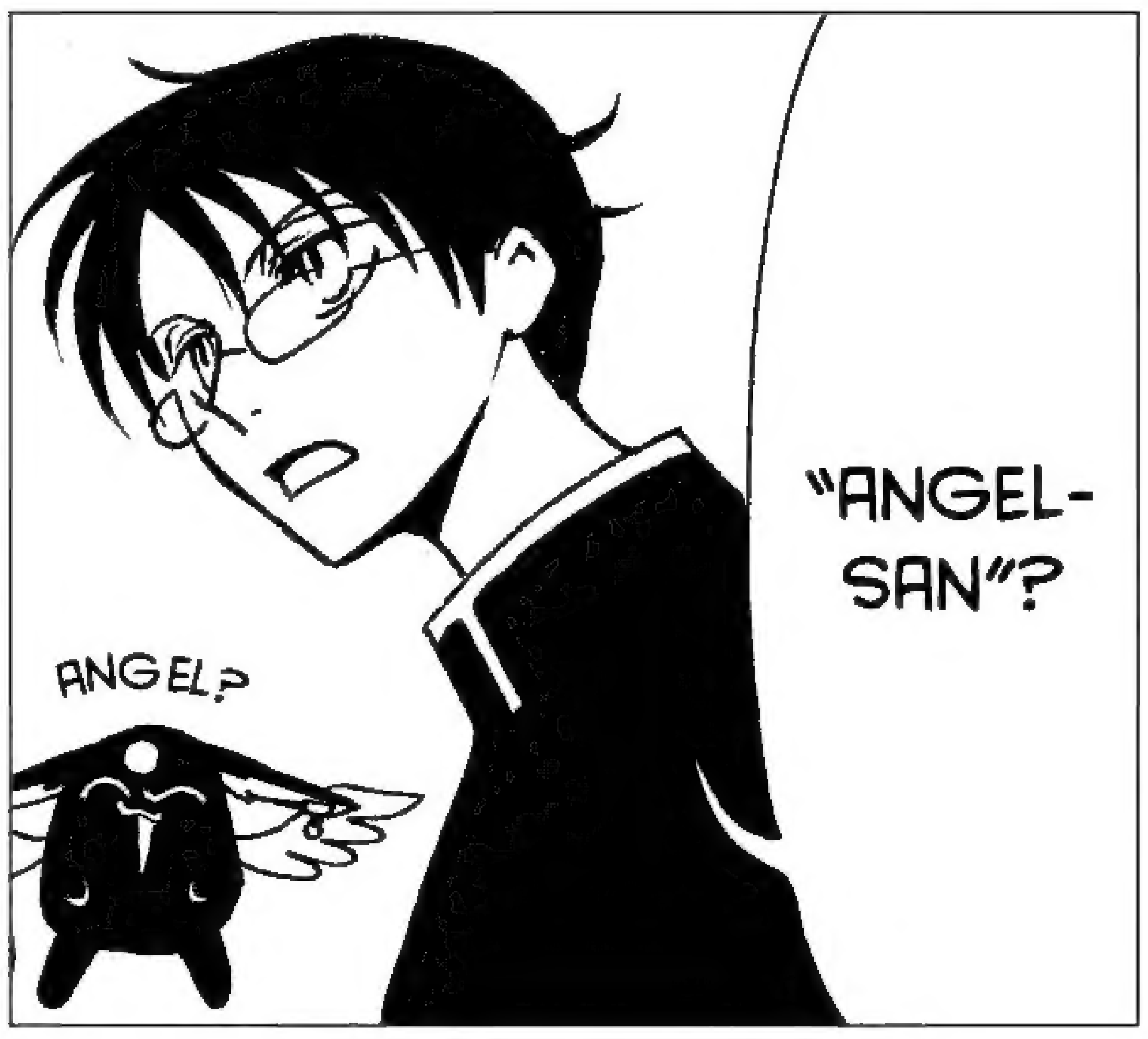
In the world of manga fandom, one of the biggest criticisms leveled at U.S. publishers of manga has to do with story adaptations. Unsurprisingly, since manga was originally published in Japan it often contains cultural references that may not make much sense to an American reader. Some publishers have therefore opted to change the references so that they make more sense here. The reason we bring this up is to make sure you know that this is not what we are doing here—in the original Japanese text, Kimihiro really is talking about *Star Wars*!


I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! STAR WARS, RIGHT?
I'VE RENTED THAT VIDEO!

Casshern



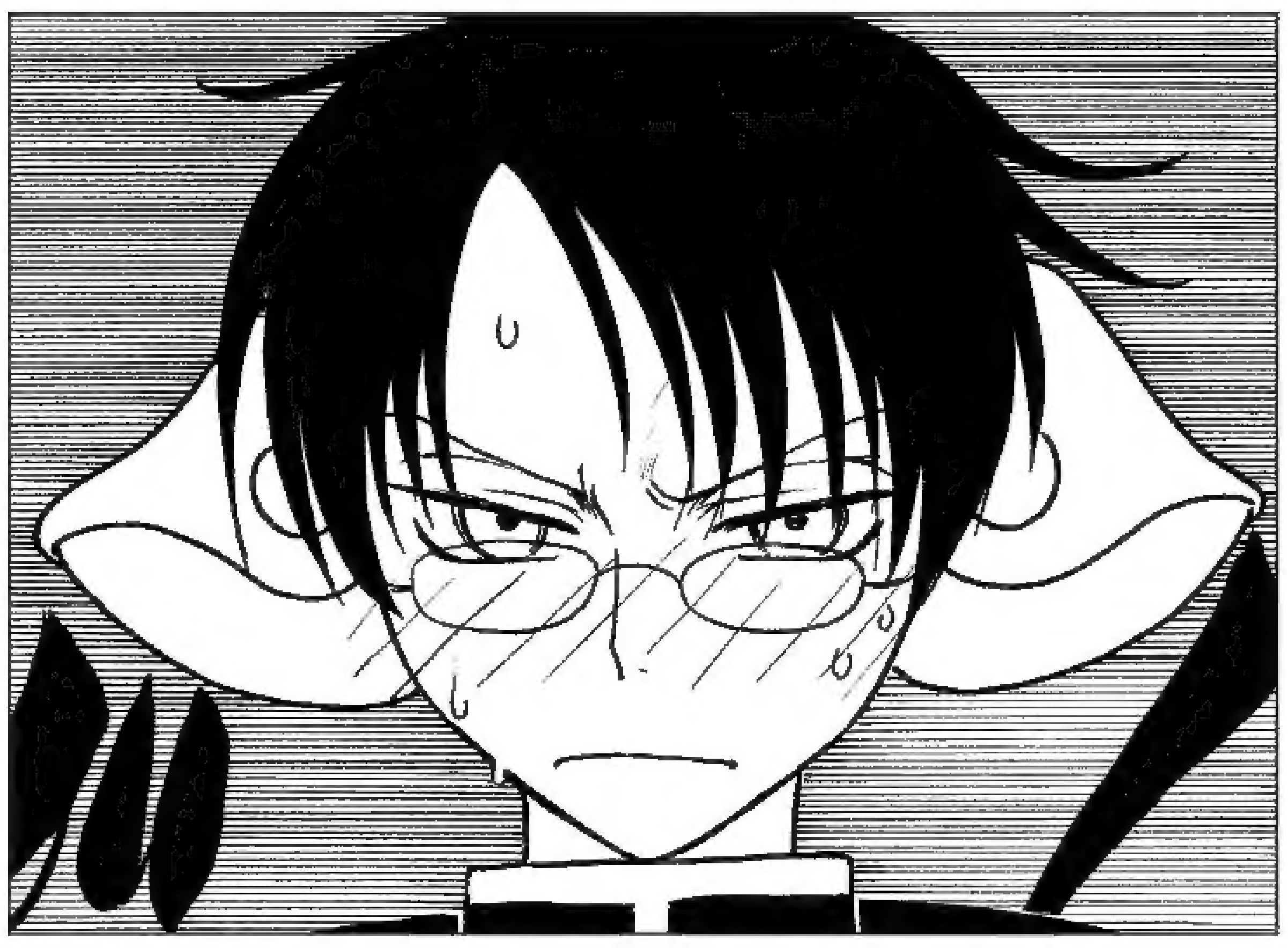
A popular 1973 TV anime show in which a scientist created a robot to clean up pollution. Unfortunately a lightning strike scrambled the brain of the powerful robot, turning it into a monomaniacal, robot-army-wielding menace. The scientist's son, Tetsuya, fuses himself with a robot to become the New Superhero Casshern, who fights the good fight against the robot army. By his side is his loyal bionic dog Friender (or Flender), and they are aided by a robot swan named Swanny, which contains the essence of Tetsuya's mother.


"ANGEL-SAN"?
ANGEL?

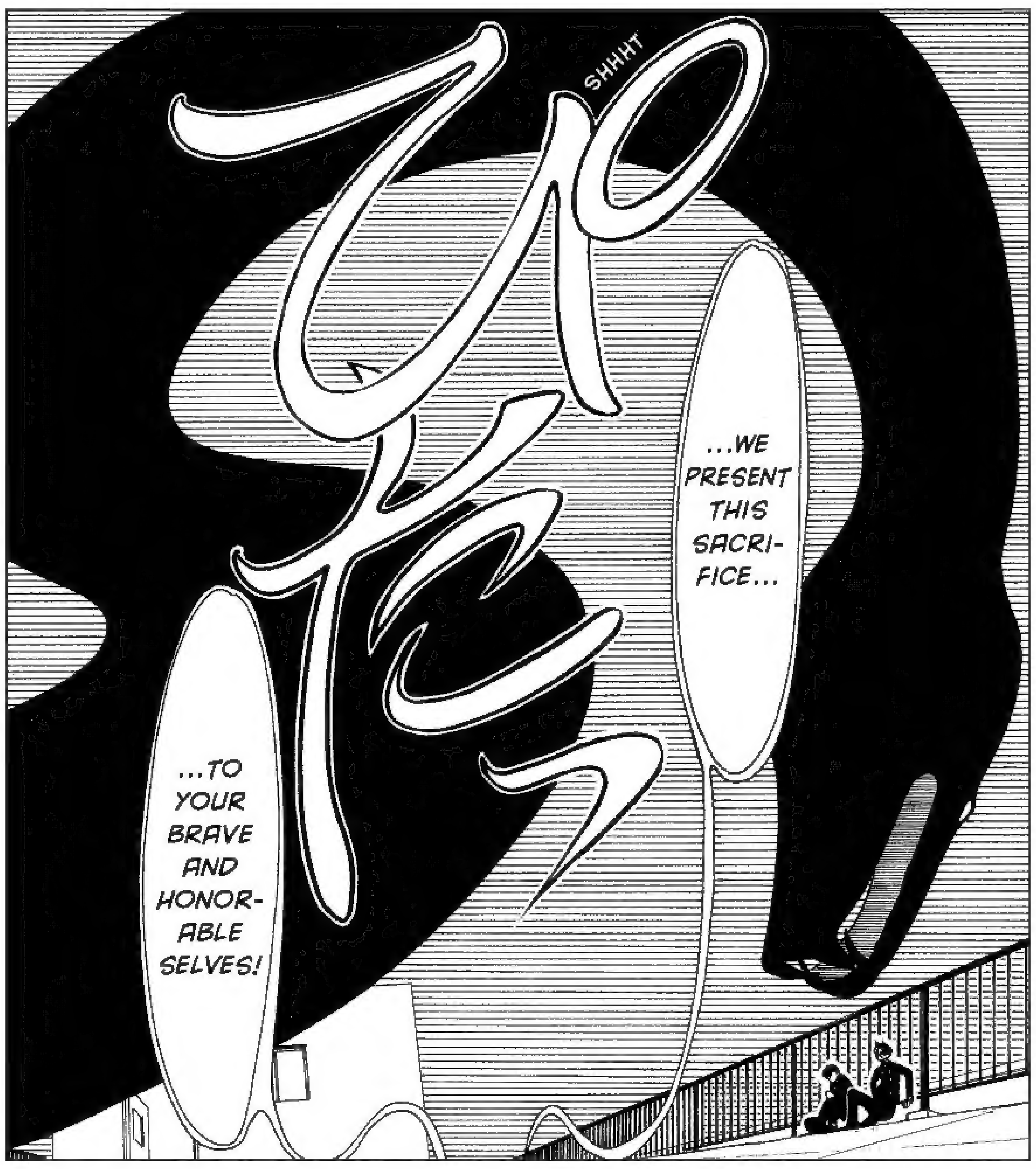
Angel-san, Kokkuri-san ("Prophesy-san")

Anyone who has bought the Parker Brother's game, Ouija, and tried to get some questions answered will recognize what is going on with Himawari-chan's friend. However, it seems that Kokkuri-san is a cousin to its American counterpart only in that both are taken from a form of mysticism found in the mid-to-late 1800s called Table Tilting. It was a form of divination that became popular because it could be done without a medium (and we all know what Yûko-san would say about that!).

Chobits



The ears, children's book, and Mokona's calling out of "Chi!" are all from the popular CLAMP manga *Chobits*.

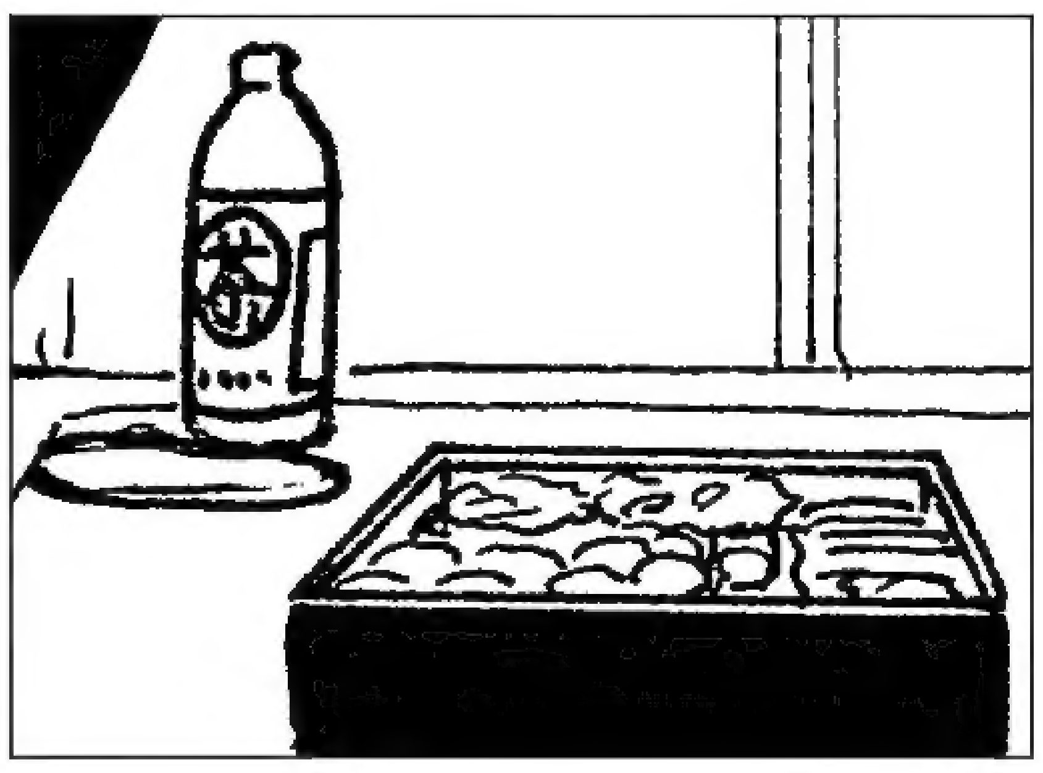

SHHHT
...WE PRESENT THIS SACRIFICE...
...TO YOUR BRAVE AND HONORABLE SELVES!

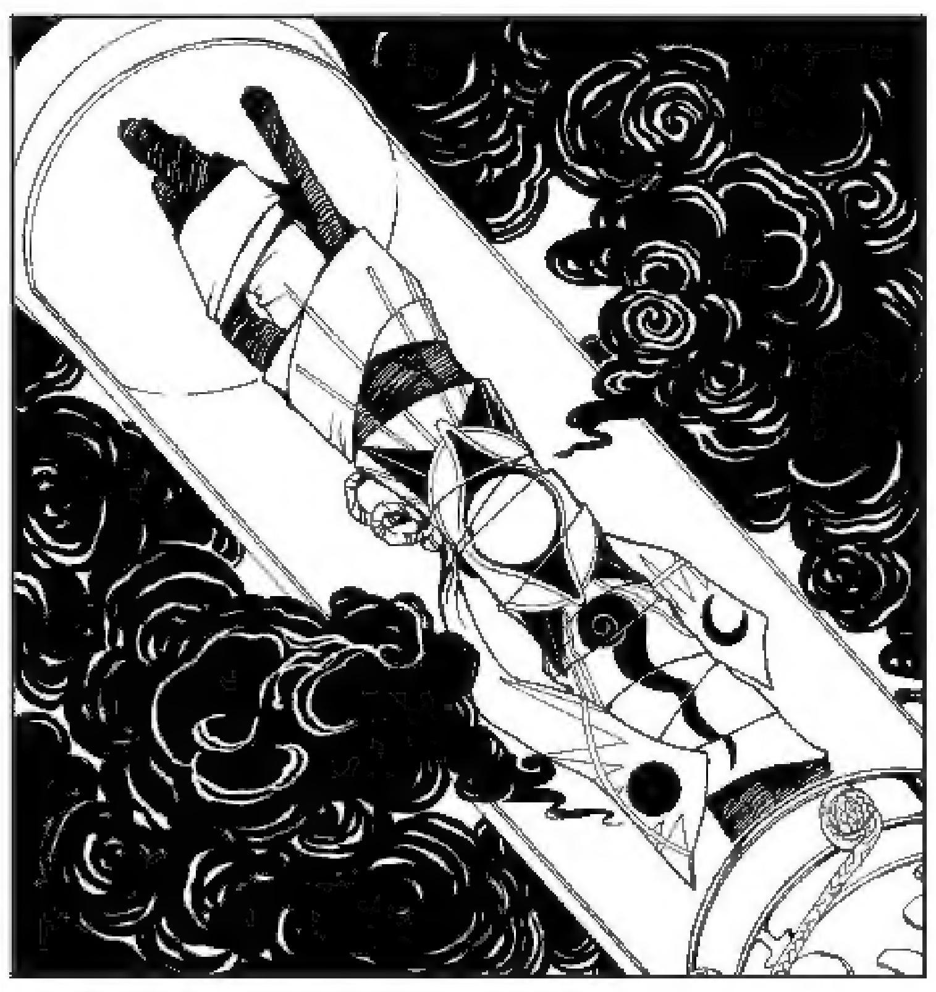
Protective Spirits and Ancestor Worship

The Shinto religion is an animistic belief centering on spirits which imbue natural phenomena (rivers, trees, etc.) with a spiritual essence. Although they are commonly referred to as gods (*kami*), they aren't the same kind of all-powerful gods that can be found in western religions. The ubiquitous household Shinto shrines found in most homes are also dedicated to a family's ancestors who have become *kami*, and in the transformation are now dedicated to protecting the family in the spirit world. The snake that Kimihiro sees includes the natural kami and ancestors of the area combined to protect the neighborhood.

Bento Boxes

Some restaurants have taken the name of "bento" to describe any lunch that's packed up to-go, but the traditional lacquered, multi-level bento box, filled with sushi or other traditional foods, is a real treat!



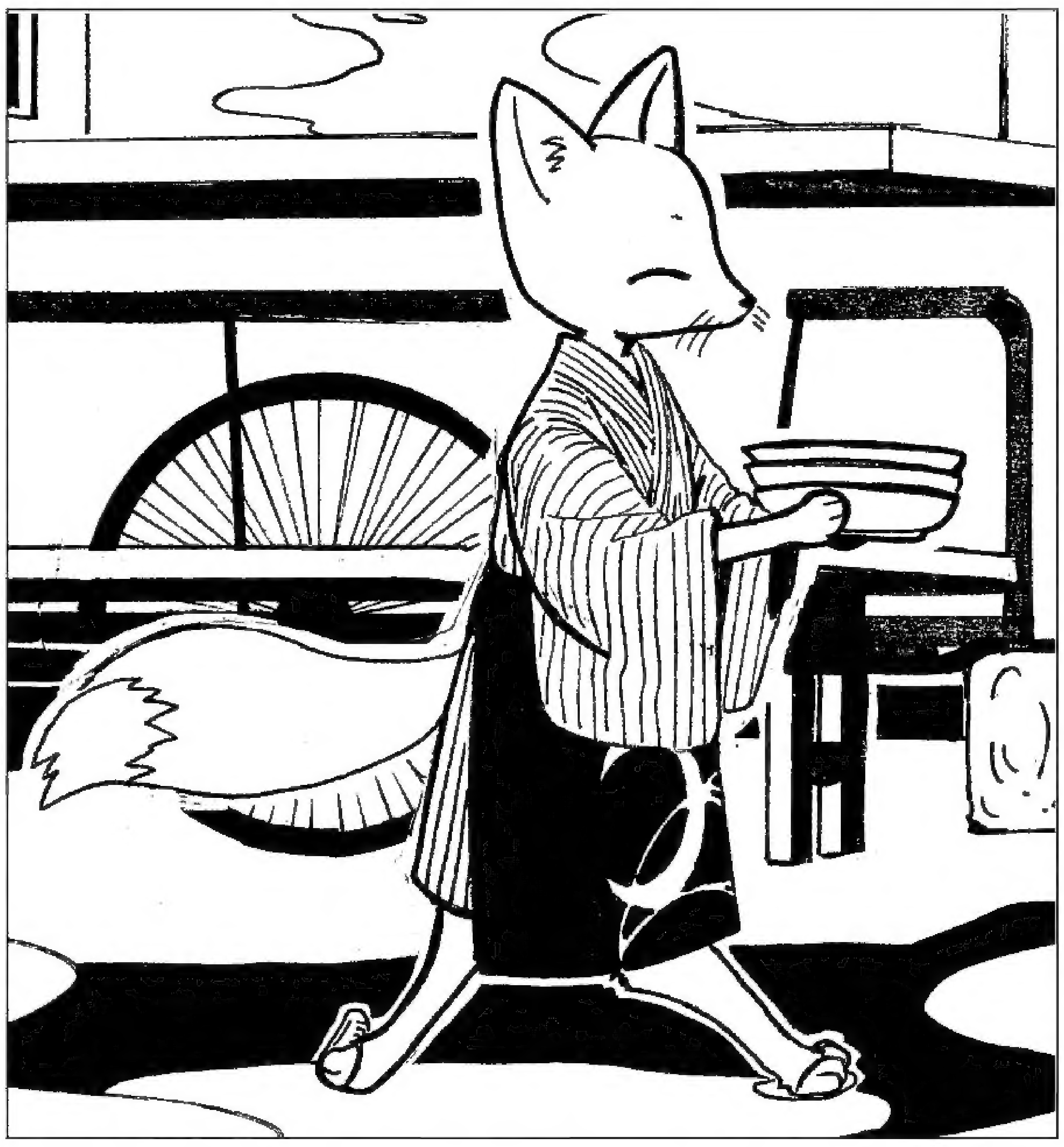


Monkey's Paw

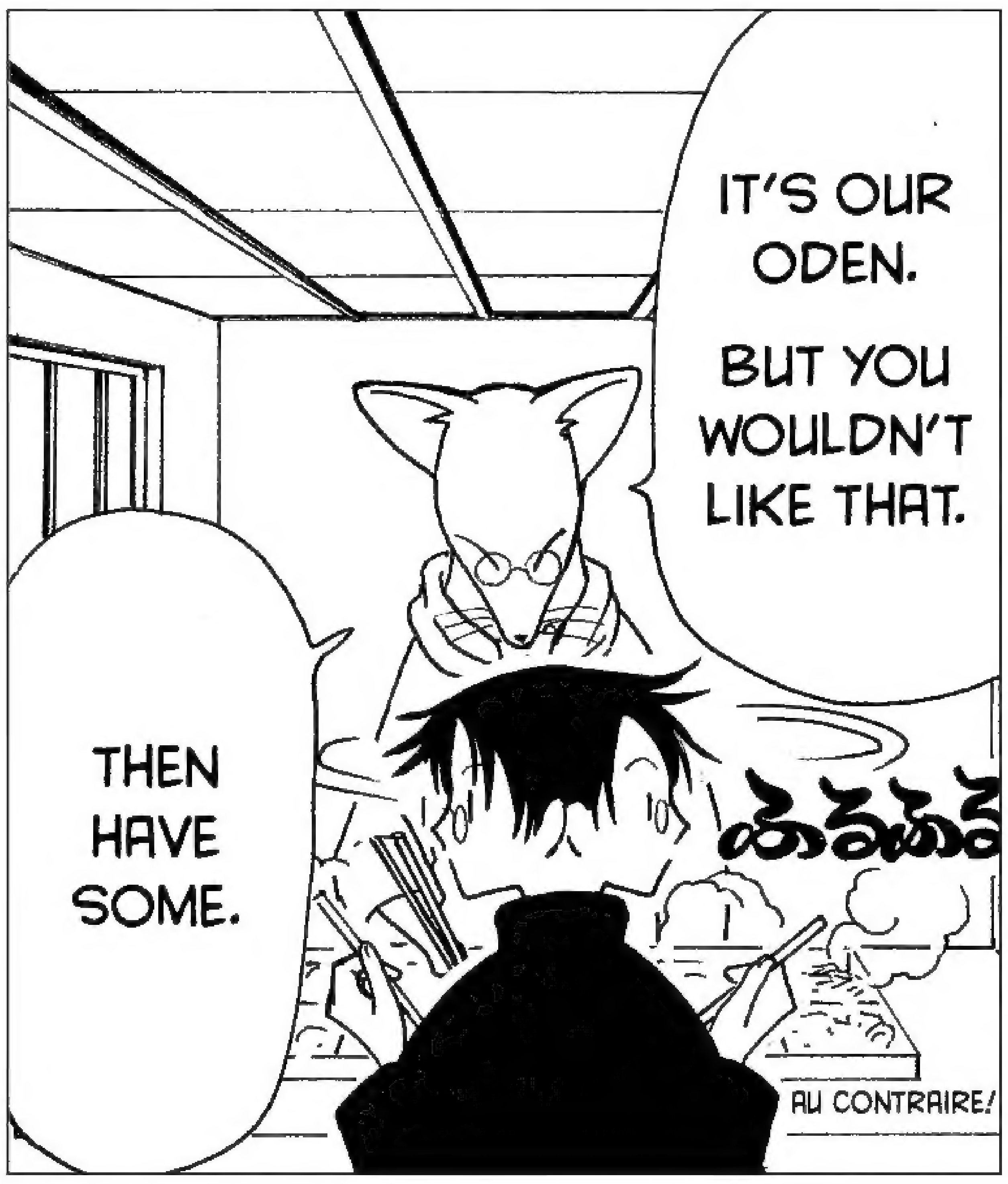
The legend of the Monkey's Paw appeared first in a short story written by William Wymark (W.W.) Jacobs in the magazine *Harper's Monthly* in 1902. Its many adaptations into movies, radio dramas, and TV programs have turned it from a turn-of-the-twentieth-century morality play regarding the dangers of the expansive British Empire into an occult myth. But who knows? W.W. Jacobs grew up on the docks of the port section of

London called Wapping and saw ships arrive from all parts of the world-spanning empire, so who can say what actual events may have inspired the story?

Kitsune Fox Spirits



Like foxes in the west, fox spirits in Japan have been portrayed as both cute, sympathetic characters, and evil, mischievous characters in the many tales about them. Usually they have magic powers such as the ability to imitate any human, but they are generally portrayed as hardworking creatures that keep to themselves. The Fushimi Inari Shrine outside of Kyoto, a beautiful set of winding mountain paths under hundreds of red, Japanese arches leading to a shrine at the summit, is dedicated to the god Inari, the god of rice, and to the foxes who are his emissaries.


IT'S OUR ODEN.
BUT YOU WOULDN'T LIKE THAT.
THEN HAVE SOME.
AU CONTRAIRE!

Oden

An inexpensive stew, subtly flavored, can feature fish, tofu, squid, octopus, mochi (rice paste), seaweed, chicken, dumplings, eggs, radishes, potatoes, and other meats, vegetables, and concoctions. Although it is a stew, the elements (meat and veggies) are usually skewered on kaboblike sticks for easy access. Oden is served in restaurants, but the more common place to find it is in sidewalk stalls much like the fox spirit's stall in the episode.